

# How Vaccines Fight Disease

## Immunizations Are Our Best Defense Against Infectious Diseases

Declining immunization rates in the United States leave us vulnerable to infection from vaccine-preventable diseases. For example, in only the first three months of 2025, there have already been more measles cases in the U.S. than in all of 2024.



In the past 50 years, immunization programs for many diseases have saved **154 million** lives globally — that's about **6 lives every minute**.



Flu costs U.S. businesses over **\$11 billion** annually. During the 2023-2024 flu season, vaccines helped prevent **9.8 million** illnesses, **4.8 million** medical visits, **120,000** hospitalizations, and **7,900** deaths.



Shingles vaccination is **90%** effective at preventing shingles and its painful side effects in adults aged 50 years and older.

In the United States, immunization of children born between 1994 and 2023 will have prevented an estimated:



**1.1 million** deaths



**32 million** hospitalizations



**508 million** illnesses



**\$2.7 trillion** total costs

## Vaccines Work

### Estimated Annual Cases Before Immunizations vs After in the United States

