

## Mayo Clinic Minute: Childhood vaccines — moving the needle up

Childhood immunization rates around the globe are beginning to recover from the dramatic drop in vaccination during the COVID-19 era, according to a [report](#) from the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

While that's good news, the numbers still remain lower than pre-pandemic levels. Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse, a pediatric infectious diseases physician with the Mayo Clinic Children's Center, says this leaves many children susceptible to vaccine-preventable infections.

Video	Audio
	"We saw routine vaccination rates amongst children drop around the world, due to a variety of different reasons, including access to care during the pandemic."
	The hope is to get more kids back on the routine schedule, says Dr. Nipunie Rajapakse.
Nipunie Rajapakse, M.D. Pediatric Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"The vaccines and our routine immunization schedule here in the United States protect against many different illnesses — including life threatening illnesses — but a variety of things, like whooping cough, tetanus, influenza, COVID-19."
	And protection against some common bacterial infections.
	"The beauty of vaccines is that they give you immunity without having to go through the risks of having the infection itself to gain that immunity. It kind of primes your immune system and teaches that how to fight off the bacteria or virus, for example, without ever having to come in contact with it directly itself."
	These vaccines have been rigorously tested, says Dr. Rajapakse.
	"Those vaccines are very safe and very effective vaccines."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, Joel Streed.