



The VACCINE Superhero

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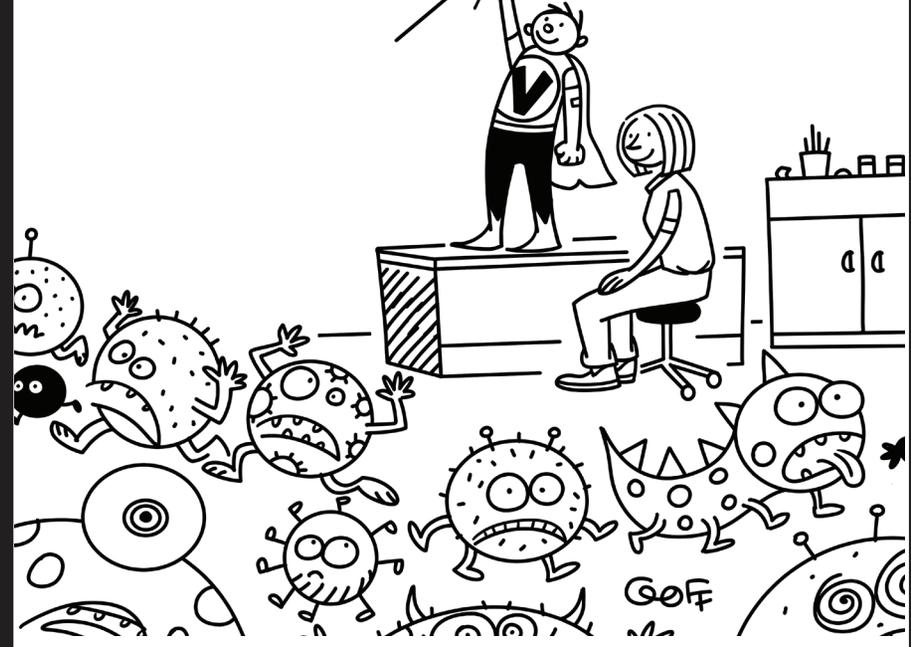
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WHY?
BECAUSE
VACCINATION KEEPS
DISEASES AWAY.



VACCINATED!



CONCEPT By MIKE POPOVICH & DALE DAUTEN, CARTOONS By TED GOFF, TEXT By DR. ALOK PATEL, DESIGN By RYAN KELLY
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WHEN YOU GET YOUR SHOT, YOU BECOME A VACCINE SUPERHERO!

By Dr. Alok Patel, Clinical Instructor of Pediatrics at Columbia University

BUT HOW DO VACCINES WORK?

Your body's defenses, the immune system, uses vaccines to become stronger and to get prepared to fight.

Think of a vaccine as a blueprint to help your body fight diseases. Vaccines are made from small amounts of weak or dead germs or viruses.

By getting vaccines, you'll help your immune system learn the secrets behind many germs. Then, when germs try and attack, they'll have no chance!

VACCINES PROTECT YOU BUT ALSO PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY!

Germs and diseases, like the flu, spread from person to person. If enough people get vaccinated and become superheroes, like you, the germs won't have anyone to infect. We call this "herd immunity," or "community immunity."

If enough people get vaccinated, disease rates can fall because the germs have nowhere to go. This is what happened with smallpox, a very deadly virus. Enough people got their shots, were able to fight smallpox, and the disease disappeared - The last case of smallpox was in 1977!

As a Vaccine Superhero, you're not only protecting yourself but you'll help protect other people, like young babies and very old people, from catching germs as well. You're defending your entire community when you get a shot!

THE FLU VIRUS TRIES TO TRICK US BUT WE CAN FIGHT IT!

Every year, the flu virus makes thousands and thousands of Americans sick. It's up to vaccine superheroes to stop it!

The flu virus tries to outsmart your immune system by mutating every year. By constantly changing, the flu virus can keep infecting people. But each year, scientists make a new vaccine that is designed specifically to fight the flu virus - no matter how it mutates. You're a superhero and you'll always be one step ahead!

This is why it's so important to get a flu shot every year. Even babies as young as six months, pregnant woman, and grandparents need the shot. And don't worry, the flu vaccine is made from dead germs, it's just a blueprint - there is no way for you to get the flu from the shot.

Get your flu shot, remember to always wash your hands, and stay home from school if you're feeling sick. Do all that and you'll be protecting yourself and your community from the flu virus!

