

by Debra Jones\*



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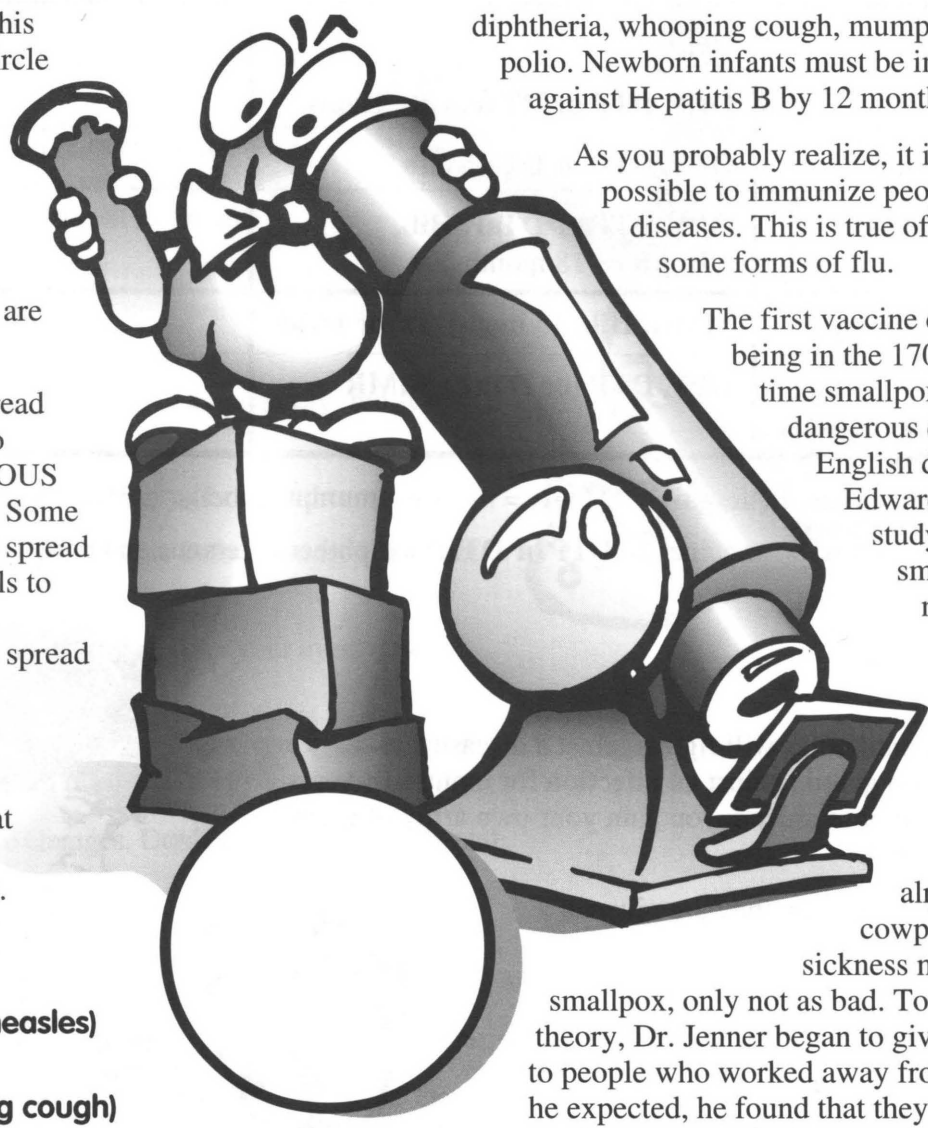
Can you see what's in this circle? No? Well, the circle contains some living organisms too small to be seen. We call them **MICROBES** (mike'-robes). Not all microbes are bad, but those that make us sick are called **GERMS**.

Diseases that germs spread from one living thing to another are **CONTAGIOUS** (kon-tay'-jus) diseases. Some contagious diseases are spread from insects and animals to people . . . and some contagious diseases are spread from people to people.

Today doctors have discovered vaccines that prevent most of the contagious diseases. "The Big 9" include:

- Measles
- Rubella (German measles)
- Diphtheria
- Pertussis (Whooping cough)
- Mumps
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis B
- Polio
- Chickenpox

Virginia State Law requires that all children entering school for the first time present a certificate of immunization against measles, German measles,



diphtheria, whooping cough, mumps, tetanus, and polio. Newborn infants must be immunized against Hepatitis B by 12 months of age.

As you probably realize, it is not yet possible to immunize people against all diseases. This is true of colds, and some forms of flu.

The first vaccine came into being in the 1700' s. At that time smallpox was a dangerous disease. An English doctor, Edward Jenner, in studying smallpox, noticed that people who milked cows didn't catch smallpox because they had already had the cowpox. This was a sickness much like

smallpox, only not as bad. To test his theory, Dr. Jenner began to give the cowpox to people who worked away from cows. As he expected, he found that they didn't get smallpox. Thus, the first vaccine came into being. (The smallpox vaccination is no longer recommended in the United States since there has not been a case in 30 years.)

We use part of Dr. Jenner's idea today. But we have found a way for the body to make antibodies without getting the sickness first. When a tiny amount of the organism (or its products) is taken into the body via an injection or oral vaccine, it causes antibodies to be

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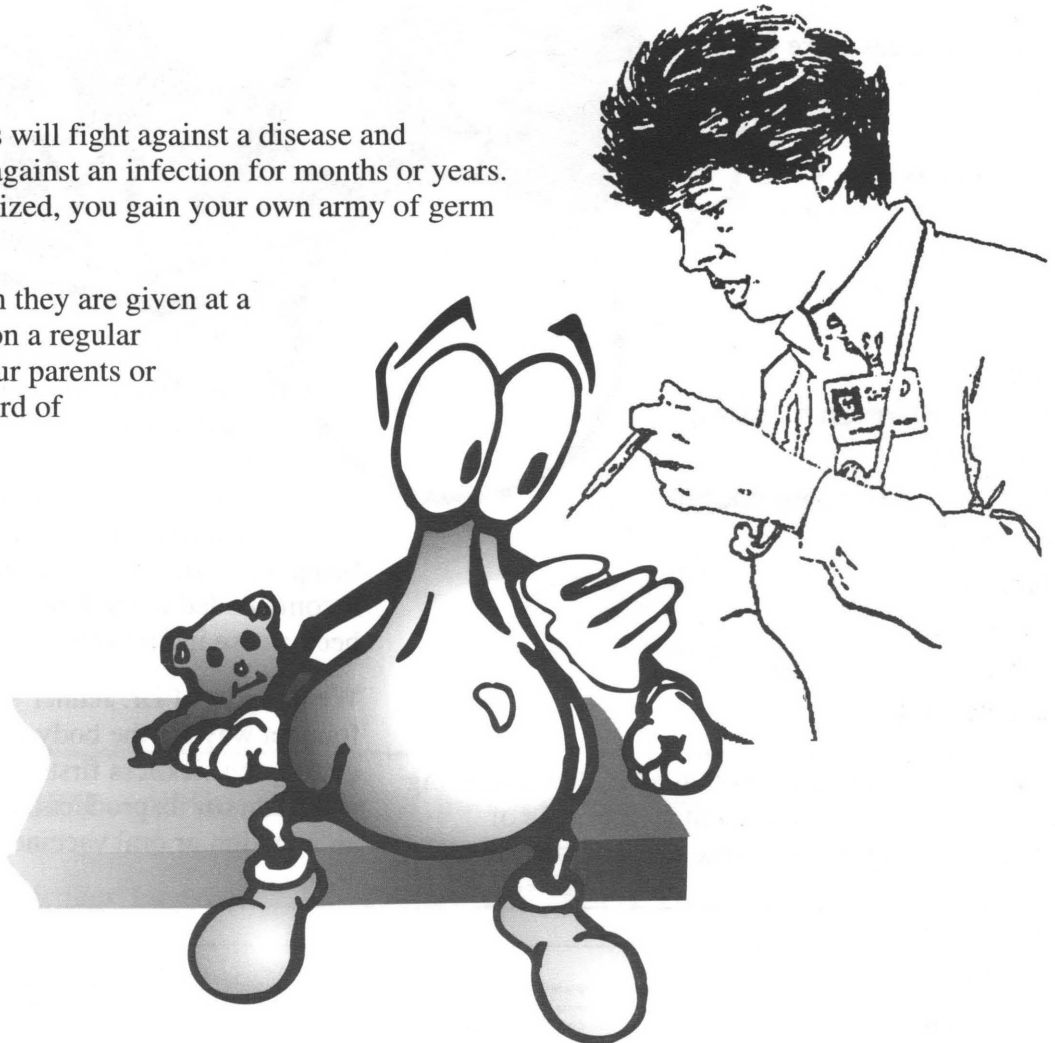
The Virginia State Department of Health Recommends the following schedule:

AGE	TYPE OF IMMUNIZATION	YOUR RECORD (✓ if immunized)
Birth	HepB	
2 months	OPV, DTP or DTaP, Hib, HepB	
4 months	OPV, DTP or DTaP, Hib	
6 months	OPV, DTP or DTaP, Hib, HepB (6-18 months)	
12-15 months	MMR, Hib, 15 mon-DTP or DTaP	
Before starting school (4-6 yrs)	OPV, DTP (or DTaP), MMR	

**Hib** = bacterial meningitis      **MMR** = measles, mumps, rubella      **HepB** = hepatitis B  
**OPV** = oral polio vaccine      **DTP or DTaP** = diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis

formed. These antibodies will fight against a disease and continue to be on guard against an infection for months or years. So, when you are immunized, you gain your own army of germ killers (antibodies).

Vaccines work best when they are given at a recommended time and on a regular schedule. Check with your parents or guardian about your record of immunizations.



# Common Cold

Whoever named the common cold knew what he was doing. Just about everybody catches a cold sometime or other.

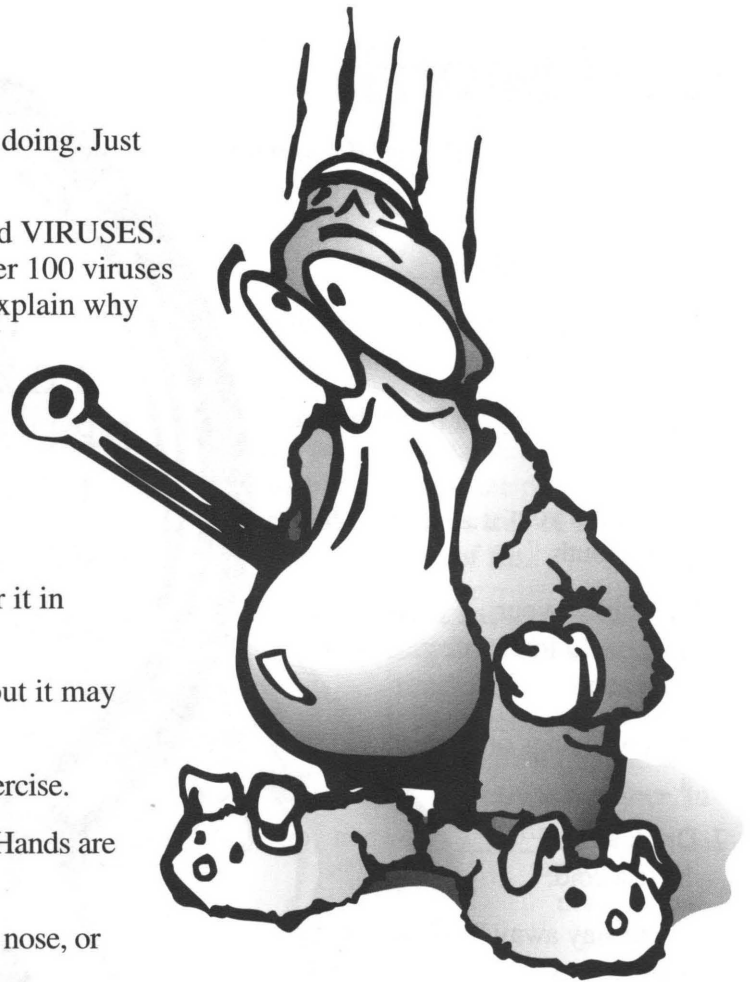
Colds are caused by tiny disease-carrying germs called **VIRUSES**. Many different viruses can cause a common cold. Over 100 viruses can attack the breathing system alone! This helps to explain why vaccination against the common cold is so difficult, if not impossible.

Sometimes viruses are selective in the areas of the body they attack. Some viruses more frequently attack the nose, others hit the throat or lungs.

The common cold usually is a self-limited disease—meaning that although there is no cure, you'll get over it in time.

How Can You Beat The Bug? There is no sure way, but it may help if you

1. Keep fit, eat good foods and get plenty of rest and exercise.
2. Wash your hands often and especially before eating. Hands are an excellent place for germs to grow.
3. Do not put your fingers on your face, or in your eyes, nose, or mouth.
4. Try to stay away from people who seem to have colds. Also, stay away from glasses and from towels that they use.
5. Avoid quick temperature changes. Don't get hot and sweaty and then go out into the cold.



If you catch a cold, be kind to your symptoms. Some survival tips are:

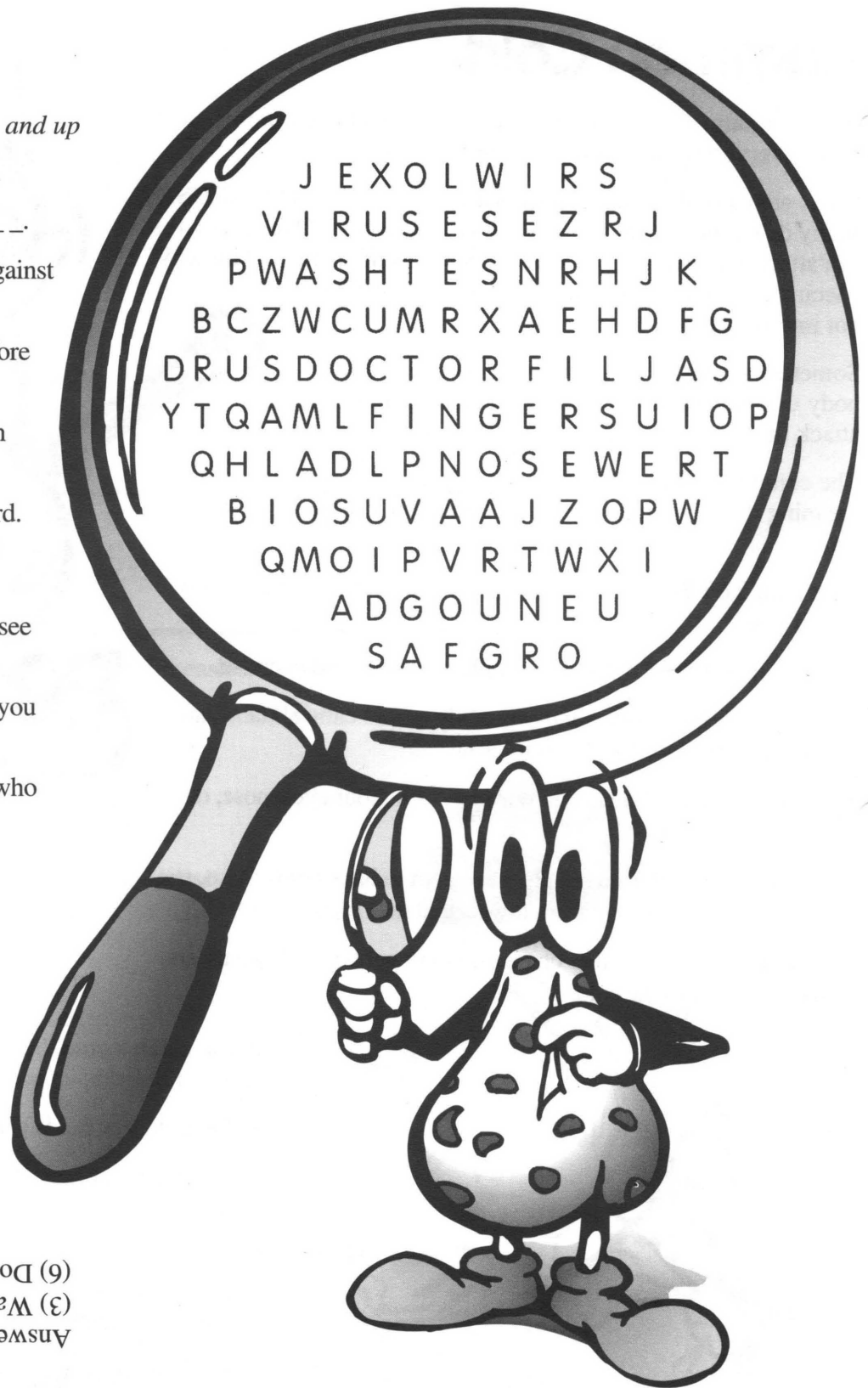
1. Drink lots of fluids and eat well balanced diet.
2. Don't take aspirin. If a fever is making you uncomfortable, take acetaminophen.
3. Remember, medicines such as cough syrups, antibiotics and other over the counter medications will not cure a cold. Get plenty of rest, and let your body get well.
4. Don't blow your nose too hard. You could force the infection into your ears.
5. Help other people keep well by covering your mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing. Wash hand afterwards to stop the spread of germs.
6. If a cold hangs on, especially if you have a severe sore throat or temperature, get in touch with a doctor. The common cold can lead to more serious diseases.



# Cold Search

(words run forward diagonally, and up and down)

1. Colds are caused by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You cannot \_\_\_\_\_ against the cold.
3. Always \_\_\_\_\_ your hands before eating.
4. Do not put your \_\_\_\_\_ in your mouth.
5. Don't blow your \_\_\_\_\_ too hard. You could force infection into your ears.
6. If a cold hangs on, you should see a \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Drink lots of \_\_\_\_\_ when you have a cold.
8. Try to stay away from people who seem to have \_\_\_\_\_.



Answers: (1) Viruses (2) Vaccinate  
 (3) Wash (4) Fingers (5) Nose  
 (6) Doctor (7) Fluids (8) Colds

GIVE YOUR CHILD A SHOT ... AT GOOD HEALTH, Bureau of Immunization, 1500 Main St., Richmond, VA 23219. 1994.

Current Health, 1977 Curriculum Innovations, Inc., Highwood, IL. 60401, December 1977-February 1978 issues.

Your Germs are Private...Keep Them to Yourself CHEP - 104A University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Cooperative Extension Service.