

Spann-ing the Globe

Vaccines

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Getting your vaccines in the States is normally a simple process. You go to the doctor or health clinic, tell them what you need, they give them to you, and you are done. Not so here. This process definitely raises your blood pressure.*

*(Please note that this is my personal experience as I have not been brave enough to try out the pediatrician and see if he vaccinates in office because my French just isn't that great).

First, you decide when to vaccinate, and you research the information on your own using the CDC guidelines. Solomon is 6 months old and fairly healthy. I realized it was time for his vaccines. To date he is able to receive the standard DTaP, Hib, Polio, Hep B, and Pneumococcal.

Next, you personally call the local missionary PA to see if she is available to give said vaccines and arrange a date to show up at her house. The day before your "appointment" is the best time to fight traffic and drive to the reputable pharmacy known for having a back-up generator (because without it, vaccines that require refrigeration will spoil).

Once at the pharmacy, you get to have an awkward French conversation about which vaccines are available for each illness, which you must now only refer to them by their French names because someone along the way decided that their trade names would not be in Latin.

After getting laughed for not saying *pneumocoque* correctly, you proceed to pantomime your desire to know if there are any generic vaccines or alternate options because \$280.38 is a lot of money for two vaccines. But since I have researched the illnesses and I know the worst case scenarios if contracted and I have compared that to the current outbreaks, I happily pay the price.



Once you have paid you take your kids to the car and pay the police officer to help you get into the traffic because the pharmacy is at a terrible intersection. Then you proceed to sit in another hour's worth of traffic but wait happily knowing there is no electricity at home and at least you are sitting in the air conditioning!

Now you get to put your medication on ice until your appointment time (the following morning) where you drive to the PA's house and wait for the vaccines to be administered and the CDC card to be filled out.

Your final step is to pick up your toddler from school and look at a note from the teacher about another outbreak of mumps and wish you could give your baby the MMR vaccine early.