

Pneumococcal Conjugate (PNEU-C13) Vaccine

Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger by building antibodies, which help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get this disease.

Who should have PNEU-C13 vaccine?

This vaccine is given to children starting at 2 months of age.

This vaccine is also offered to older children and adults with a higher risk of severe pneumococcal disease because of health problems (e.g., removed spleen, weak immune system).

Healthy adults 65 years of age and older may benefit from this vaccine. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to find out if it is a good idea for you. Healthy adults have to pay for this vaccine. Check with your health insurance provider as some plans may cover the cost.

How many doses of this vaccine are needed?

Most healthy children need 3 doses which are usually given at 2, 4, and 12 months of age. An extra dose is given at 6 months for children at high risk because of certain health problems..

Fewer doses are needed if immunization is started after 7 months of age. Delaying this immunization is not recommended because infants have a higher risk of this disease.

For high risk people, only 1 dose is needed if it is given at 6 years of age or older.

Are there other vaccines that protect against pneumococcal disease?

There are other pneumococcal conjugate vaccines which protect against fewer strains than PNEU-C13. Check with a public health nurse if your child is 4 years of age or younger and has not had PNEU-C13 vaccine.

There is another pneumococcal vaccine called pneumococcal polysaccharide (PNEUMO-P). Anyone over 2 years of age with certain health problems (e.g., heart, lung, kidney, and liver problems; diabetes; weak immune system) and all adults over 65 years of age should have PNEUMO-P vaccine, even if they have already had PNEU-C13.

For people who need both PNEU-C13 and PNEUMO-P vaccines, it is best to get PNEU-C13 vaccine first. The 2 vaccines must be carefully spaced.

How well does the vaccine work?

Protection against severe infection (e.g., blood infections and meningitis) caused by the 13 strains covered by PNEU-C13 vaccine is between 86% and 97% for healthy children under 5 years of age.

In adults 65 years and older, protection against pneumonia or blood infections is between 45% and 75%.

Where can I get the vaccine?

This vaccine is given at a public health office in your area.

Are there side effects from PNEU-C13 vaccine?

Reactions to the vaccine are usually mild and go away in a few days. They may include:

- redness, swelling, and discomfort where the needle was given
- feeling tired, irritable
- headache or body aches
- fever or chills
- poor appetite, vomiting, or diarrhea
- rash

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after immunization because people can have a rare but serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

Unusual reactions can happen after being immunized. Call Health Link at 811 to report any unusual reactions.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with discomfort and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area.
- If you need fever or pain medicine, check with your pharmacist or doctor. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 19 years old because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems (e.g., weak immune system) must call their doctor whenever they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor—even if you think the fever was due to immunization.

Is there anyone who cannot have PNEU-C13 vaccine?

You may not be able to have the vaccine if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the vaccine—always tell your healthcare provider about allergies.
- had a severe or unusual reaction after this vaccine (or a similar one)—always tell your healthcare provider if you have had reactions.

You can be immunized if you have a mild illness (e.g., cold), even if you have a fever.

For More Information



Call Health Link at **811**



Go to immunizealberta.ca



Go to myhealth.alberta.ca

Quick Facts: Pneumococcal Disease

What it is

- bacteria that can cause respiratory and middle ear infections, pneumonia, meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), and blood infections
- main cause of bacterial blood infections and meningitis in young children and pneumonia in adults
- causes 500,000 deaths per year in children under 5 years old, worldwide
- when adults get this disease and have a blood infection, 1 in 20 can die

Who is most at risk

Most serious infections happen in people who:

- are very young or very old
- have certain chronic health conditions
- smoke or are addicted to alcohol or drugs

How it spreads

- spread by coughing and sneezing
- can spread from saliva (e.g. kissing, sharing food, shared toys)
- some people do not have symptoms, but can spread the disease