

## VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT

# Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine

## What You Need to Know

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

Hojas de información sobre vacunas están disponibles en español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis)

### 1 Why get vaccinated?

Vaccination can protect older adults (and some children and younger adults) from **pneumococcal disease**.

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria that can spread from person to person through close contact. It can cause ear infections, and it can also lead to more serious infections of the:

- Lungs (pneumonia),
- Blood (bacteremia), and
- Covering of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). Meningitis can cause deafness and brain damage, and it can be fatal.

Anyone can get pneumococcal disease, but children under 2 years of age, people with certain medical conditions, adults over 65 years of age, and cigarette smokers are at the highest risk.

About 18,000 older adults die each year from pneumococcal disease in the United States.

Treatment of pneumococcal infections with penicillin and other drugs used to be more effective. But some strains of the disease have become resistant to these drugs. This makes prevention of the disease, through vaccination, even more important.

### 2 Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23)

Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23) protects against 23 types of pneumococcal bacteria. It will not prevent all pneumococcal disease.

PPSV23 is recommended for:

- All adults 65 years of age and older,
- Anyone 2 through 64 years of age with certain long-term health problems,
- Anyone 2 through 64 years of age with a weakened immune system,
- Adults 19 through 64 years of age who smoke cigarettes or have asthma.

Most people need only one dose of PPSV. A second dose is recommended for certain high-risk groups. People 65 and older should get a dose even if they have gotten one or more doses of the vaccine before they turned 65.

Your healthcare provider can give you more information about these recommendations.

Most healthy adults develop protection within 2 to 3 weeks of getting the shot.

### 3 Some people should not get this vaccine

- Anyone who has had a life-threatening allergic reaction to PPSV should not get another dose.
- Anyone who has a severe allergy to any component of PPSV should not receive it. Tell your provider if you have any severe allergies.
- Anyone who is moderately or severely ill when the shot is scheduled may be asked to wait until they recover before getting the vaccine. Someone with a mild illness can usually be vaccinated.
- Children less than 2 years of age should not receive this vaccine.
- There is no evidence that PPSV is harmful to either a pregnant woman or to her fetus. However, as a precaution, women who need the vaccine should be vaccinated before becoming pregnant, if possible.



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