

Healthcare Providers:

CDC Releases New Recommendations for Pneumococcal Vaccination

CDC released a new recommendation for the use of pneumococcal vaccination among adults. Adults aged 65 or older are now recommended to get the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13, Prevnar-13®) and then be vaccinated with the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23, Pneumovax®23) 6-12 months later.

Both PCV13 and PPSV23 provide good protection against invasive forms of pneumococcal infection. Although PPSV23 protects against more serotypes than PCV13, studies do not consistently show effectiveness against non-bacteremic pneumonia.

In June 2014, the results of a large randomized placebo-controlled trial evaluating efficacy of PCV13 against community-acquired pneumonia among adults 65 years or older (CAPiTA trial) became available.¹ The results of this trial among approximately 85,000 adults 65 years or older demonstrated 45% efficacy of PCV13 against vaccine-type community-acquired pneumococcal pneumonia and 75% efficacy against vaccine-type invasive pneumococcal disease. Thus, PCV13 helps to fill the gap in protection against non-invasive pneumococcal pneumonia.

As part of the new recommendation, adults 65 years of age or older who have not previously received any pneumococcal vaccines or whose previous vaccination history is unknown should receive a dose of PCV13 first, followed 6-12 months later by a dose of PPSV23. Adults 65 years of age or older who have previously received PPSV23 should receive PCV13 at least 1 year since their most recent dose of PPSV23.

In addition to the new recommendation for pneumococcal vaccination of adults 65 years or older, it's important to remember that pneumococcal vaccines are also recommended for adults 19 years or older with certain health conditions and lifestyles.^{2 3}

“Thousands of older adults die and many more are hospitalized from pneumococcal disease every year, but many adults aren't aware that there are vaccines that can prevent it,” said Dr. Anne Schuchat, assistant surgeon general and director of CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “A lot of adults get their flu shot this time of year, which is a great time to review with the patient their immunization status and recommend pneumococcal and other vaccines to those that need them.”

There are also other vaccines recommended for adults besides the pneumococcal and flu vaccines, so it's important to make sure adults are up-to-date on all the vaccines recommended for them based on their age, lifestyle, occupation, health condition, travel, or other factors.

Most private health insurance covers pneumococcal vaccines. At this time, Medicare Part B typically covers only the first dose of pneumococcal vaccine for older adults and pays 100% of the cost of covered pneumococcal vaccines.

¹ Community Acquired Pneumonia Immunization Trial in Adults (CAPiTA) Abstract # 0541. 2014. at <https://pneumonia.org.au/public/journals/22/PublicFolder/ABSTRACTBOOKMASTERforwebupdated20-3-14.pdf>.

² Pneumococcal ACIP Vaccine Recommendations at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/pneumo.html>.

³ Pneumococcal Vaccination at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/default.htm>

Summary of pneumococcal vaccine recommendations for adults

PCV13 is recommended for:

- All adults 65 years or older
- Adults 19 years or older with certain [health conditions](#) such as sickle cell disease or asplenia
- Adults 19 years or older who are immunocompromised, including those with HIV infection

PPSV23 is recommended for:

- All adults 65 years or older
- Adults 19 years or older with [health conditions](#) such as heart disease, lung disease (including asthma), sickle cell disease, diabetes, alcoholism, and cirrhosis
- Adults 19 years or older who are immunocompromised, including those with HIV infection
- Adults who smoke cigarettes

To learn more about the new pneumococcal recommendation for adults 65 years old or older, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6337a4.htm>. For a complete list of pneumococcal vaccination recommendations, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/pneumo.html>.

For more information on adult vaccine recommendations, go to CDC's [Adult Immunization Schedules](#) page or download the [CDC Vaccine Schedules](#) app.