



What you need to know about the **Pneumococcal vaccine (pneumonia)**

Pneumonia is a lung infection that causes mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Pneumococcal bacteria cause pneumonia, which is most common in young children and can be very serious for older adults. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent pneumonia. To learn more, read the questions and answers below. Talk to your primary care provider about pneumonia and other recommended vaccines.

Who should get the pneumococcal vaccine, and when?

Most children under five – and adults over 65 – should be vaccinated against pneumococcal disease. People ages 6-64 with certain medical conditions should also be vaccinated, and some people under age 18 should receive an additional dose if recommended by his/her doctor. Talk to your healthcare provider to determine if the pneumococcal vaccine is right for you.

Is the pneumococcal vaccine safe? Is it effective?

The vaccine is very safe and effective for preventing pneumonia and related health complications. Severe cases of pneumonia have dropped dramatically in children and adults since the vaccine was first introduced decades ago.

Are there any side effects from getting the vaccine?

Side effects are usually very mild, and many people do not experience any side effects at all. Some report redness and mild pain at the injection site, fever, tiredness, and muscle aches. These mild side effects typically go away within two days.

Who should not be vaccinated?

People who have had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of a pneumonia vaccine should not get more doses. Anyone with a severe allergy to vaccine ingredients should not get vaccinated. If you are pregnant or have allergies or other health concerns, talk to your doctor before getting the pneumococcal vaccine.

Why should I get vaccinated?

While certain groups are at higher risk, anyone can get pneumonia and spread it to others. Pneumococcal bacteria can grow when other viruses or bacteria, like the flu or a cold, infect the upper respiratory tract. Vaccination is the best way to ensure minor illnesses do not lead to severe pneumonia.

To learn more about the pneumonia vaccine or other routine immunizations for your family, talk to your primary care provider or visit beimmunekansas.org.

