

Why are vaccinations important for adults?

Although shots are often associated with infants and young children, certain vaccinations are important for protecting adults because older people are more likely to suffer serious complications from common disease.

Vaccines are available to prevent a number of illnesses that contribute to morbidity (complications) and death in adults in the United States.

Influenza is responsible for 20,000 to 40,000 deaths annually. AND mortality from **Pneumococcal** infections (**pneumonia**, **sepsis**, and **meningitis**) is estimated at 40,000 deaths annually.

Hepatitis B infections occur in 200,000 to 300,000 people and result in 10,000 to 15,000 hospitalizations and 250 deaths per year.

According to recent studies, adults represent:

- 95% of **tetanus** cases and 100% of deaths due to **tetanus** during 1991-1994
- more than 60% of cases of **diphtheria** during 1985-89
- 33% of **measles** cases during 1996

- 20% of reported **mumps** cases in 1993
- 85% of **rubella** cases in 1994-1996.

What vaccinations are available?

Depending on medical history and risk of exposure, adults should consider vaccination against the following diseases:

Influenza (flu) **Pneumococcal**
disease Tetanus Diphtheria
Hepatitis A Hepatitis B
Measles Mumps Rubella
Chickenpox

For more information:

[AMA \(Infectious Disease\)](#)

[Vaccination resources](#)

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/1804.html>

["Big shots"](#)

<http://www.fi.edu/inquirer/shot.html>

Adult Immunization Schedule:

Vaccines for adults

<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/adult-schedule.htm>

[P4030 Vaccinations for Adults:](#)

[You're never too old to get immunized!](#)

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4030a.pdf>



Healthy People 2010:

Prevent disease, disability, and death from infectious diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases.

14-1 "Reduce or eliminate indigenous cases of vaccine preventable diseases."

Vaccinations are important for adults, too!

Gonzaga graduate nursing student **Amber Edwards, RN** created this informational material. It should be used in consultation with a health care provider.

Do I need any vaccinations today?

- I am 50 years of age or older
- I am younger than 50 years of age and one or more of the following conditions pertains to me:

lung disease heart disease
 kidney disease diabetes
 HIV/AIDS
 a disease that affects my immune system
 I live in a nursing home or care facility
 I am a healthcare worker
 I provide community services
 I have a condition (e.g., spinal cord injury or seizure disorder) that causes me to choke when I swallow
 I will be pregnant during flu season (December- March)

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, talk to your primary care provider about getting vaccinated against **influenza** this season.

- I am 65 years of age or older
- I had one dose of Pneumococcal vaccine when I was under 65; it has been at least 5 years since that dose

- I have one of the following health problems:

any listed above
 liver disease such as alcoholism
 cochlear implant
 organ or bone marrow transplant
 multiple myeloma, lymphoma, or leukemia

If you answered **YES** to any of the previous questions, talk to your primary care provider about getting a **Pneumococcal** vaccine.



- I have not completed the **three – dose** vaccination series against Hepatitis B and
- I am in one of the following risk groups:
 - I live with a person who has hepatitis B virus infection
 - I inject street drugs
 - I am on kidney dialysis
 - I have had more than **one** sex partner in a 6 month period
 - I am a healthcare worker who is exposed to blood & body fluids
 - I have a bleeding disorder that requires transfusion
 - I am an immigrant

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, talk to your primary care provider about completing the **Hepatitis B** series.

- I have not had the **two- dose** vaccine against Hepatitis A and
- I am in one of the following risk groups:

I travel to countries other than the USA or Canada
 I am a man who has sex with other men
 I use street drugs
 I have a clotting disorder
 I have chronic liver disease

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, talk to your primary care provider about getting a vaccine to protect against **Hepatitis A**.



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- I am a woman thinking about a future pregnancy & do not know if I am immune to rubella
- I am included in one of the following groups for whom **2 doses** are recommended, but have only had **one**:

I am a healthcare worker
 I travel internationally
 I am entering college or post high school education
 I had a blood test that showed I am not immune to rubella

If you answered **YES** to any of the above, you may need an **MMR** vaccine.

- I have not had at least **three** tetanus & diphtheria containing shots
- I have had at least 3 tetanus & diphtheria containing shots in my lifetime, but the last one was more than **10** years ago

If you answered **YES** to either of the above, it may be time to get a **Td or DTaP** vaccine.

- I am a college freshman living in a dorm
- I have sickle cell disease or my spleen isn't working or has been removed

If you answered **YES** to either of the above, talk to your primary care provider about getting a **meningococcal** vaccination.

