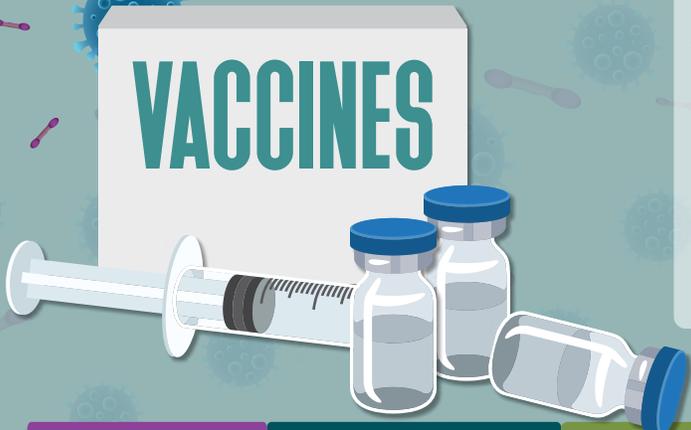


OUR BEST SHOT: The Importance of Vaccines for Older Adults



QUICK GUIDE TO CDC-RECOMMENDED VACCINES FOR ADULTS AGES 65+

Vaccines are an important step in protecting your health and the health of your family. They are one of our best defenses against many infectious diseases and have saved millions of lives. This QUICK GUIDE outlines the symptoms and potential complications of some of the most common infectious diseases and lays out the CDC-recommended vaccines for adults ages 65+.

Bacteria / Virus	How It Spreads	Symptoms Can Include	Possible Complications
Influenza (Flu)	Respiratory virus that spreads through droplets — from coughing, sneezing, or talking — that land on other people or objects they then touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever*/feeling feverish ● Cough ● Sore throat ● Runny or stuffy nose ● Muscle or body aches ● Headaches ● Fatigue ● Vomiting or diarrhea (mostly in kids) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinus & ear infections ● Worsening of existing diseases ● Heart attacks or strokes ● Hospitalization and death
Pneumococcus (Pneumonia)	One of many germs that can cause pneumonia. Pneumococcus bacteria is spread through direct contact with saliva or mucus. People can carry bacteria in their nose without symptoms, while others develop illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever* and chills ● Cough ● Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing ● Chest pain ● Confusion or low alertness in older adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lung infections ● Sinus and ear infections ● Blood stream infection ● Infection of brain and spinal cord lining (meningitis) ● Heart infection (pericarditis) ● Blockage of airway to lungs ● Lung collapse ● Abscess in lungs ● Hospitalization and death

Bacteria / Virus	How It Spreads	Symptoms Can Include	Possible Complications
SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	Respiratory virus that spreads similarly to the flu but that is also airborne — entering the body through the nose, mouth, and eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever* or chills ● Cough ● Shortness of breath or trouble breathing ● Sore throat ● Fatigue ● Muscle or body aches ● Headache ● Loss of taste or smell ● Congestion or runny nose ● Nausea or vomiting ● Diarrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Worsening of chronic disease symptoms ● “Long COVID” with symptoms lasting for months to even years ● Hospitalization and death
Tetanus	Bacteria that enters the body through a deep flesh wound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spasms & stiffness of jaw, neck, and stomach muscles ● Difficulty swallowing ● Painful body spasms ● Fever* & sweating ● Raised blood pressure ● Rapid heart rate ● Locking of neck & jaw muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nervous system impairment from toxin produced by bacteria ● Interference with ability to breathe ● Hospitalization and death
Diphtheria	While relatively uncommon, a bacteria that spreads through droplets — from coughing, sneezing, or talking — that land on other people or objects they then touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weakness ● Sore throat ● Fever* ● Swollen glands in neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Destruction of healthy tissue from toxins produced by bacteria, making it hard to breathe and swallow ● Lung infections ● Heart, kidney, and nerve damage from toxins in the blood stream ● Paralysis and death

Bacteria / Virus	How It Spreads	Symptoms Can Include	Possible Complications
<p>Pertussis (Whooping cough)</p>	<p>Respiratory bacteria that spread through droplets — from coughing, sneezing, talking, and even sharing breathing space</p>	<p>EARLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mild, occasional cough ● Low-grade fever* ● Apnea (pause in breathing) ● Runny nose <p>AFTER 1 to 2 WEEKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rapid coughing fits ● Distinct “whoop” sounding cough ● Vomiting & exhaustion after coughing fits <p>Older children and adults may not have symptoms but can still spread the illness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weight loss ● Passing out ● Rib fractures ● Convulsions ● Apnea ● Brain infection ● Hospitalization and death
<p>Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</p>	<p>Respiratory virus that spreads through droplets — from coughing, sneezing, or talking — that land on other people or objects they then touch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cough ● Runny or stuffy nose ● Low grade fever* ● Sore throat ● Sneezing ● Headaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Difficulty breathing ● Lung infection ● Congestive heart failure ● Hospitalization ● Death
<p>Varicella zoster (Shingles)</p>	<p>Chicken pox virus that lies dormant and can be reactivated many years later as a shingles infection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pain, itching, or tingling before rash appears ● Rash that commonly occurs as stripe around left or right side of body, on side of face, or near eye ● Fever* ● Headache ● Chills ● Upset stomach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN) — often severe and debilitating pain where rash occurred ● Loss of vision and blindness ● Pneumonia ● Hearing problems ● Brain inflammation ● Death

* In adults ages 65+, a single temperature reading higher than 100°F (37.8°C), multiple readings above 99°F (37.2°C), or a rise in temperature greater than 2°F (1.1°C) above the person's normal temperature may be a sign of infection. Normal body temperatures and fever temperatures can be lower in older adults than in younger adults.

RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATIONS FOR ADULTS AGES 65+

Disease	Ages 65+
Influenza (Flu)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 dose each year of an enhanced influenza vaccine — either a high-dose or adjuvanted — if available <p><i>If an enhanced vaccine is not available, any age appropriate flu vaccine is better than no vaccine</i></p>
Pneumococcal (Pneumonia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 dose PCV15 followed by PPSV23 OR 1 dose PCV20 <p><i>People who have previously received a vaccine for pneumonia should consult with their healthcare professional to see if any additional doses are recommended</i></p>
SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If it has been at least four months since your last COVID-19 vaccine, you can get another dose. <p><i>For more information on who is eligible for COVID-19 vaccines, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html</i></p>
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adults 60 and older should receive an RSV vaccine based on shared-decision making, meaning the patient and healthcare professional should decide together
Tetanus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 dose of Tdap if you haven't had one as an adult ● 1 Td or Tdap booster every 10 years
Diphtheria	
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	
Varicella zoster (Shingles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 doses RZV vaccine 2 – 6 months apart if haven't yet received this vaccine <p><i>If you've already had a shingles infection or were vaccinated with an older shingles vaccine, you should still get vaccinated</i></p>



People with certain risk factors due to health, job, or lifestyle that are not listed here, may need additional vaccines including varicella (chicken pox), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningococcal (meningitis), and Hib (haemophilus influenza type b) vaccines. Talk to your healthcare professional to see if you need any of these vaccines.



If you are traveling outside of the U.S., you may need additional vaccines. Ask your healthcare professional about which vaccines you need at least 6 weeks before you travel.

Helpful Resources

Learn more about what vaccines are recommended for you, how they work, and more at www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Report vaccine reactions to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) at www.vaers.hhs.gov or by phone at 800-822-7967

Get helpful resources on vaccination in older adults at www.agingresearch.org/OurBestShot



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