



Pneumococcal Vaccine Fact Sheet

Ask an Expert Office Hours

1. Pneumococcal vaccines, also known as Pneumovax-23, Prevnar and pneumonia vaccine, are given to prevent an infection by the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.¹
2. The idea that pneumococcal vaccines prevent pneumonia is confusing, as pneumonia is an infectious inflammation of the lung's air sacs, which can be caused by many different bacteria and viruses.²
3. The SARS-CoV-2 virus can cause pneumonia itself or can predispose patients to develop pneumonia due to some other microbe.³ Interestingly, *S. pneumoniae* is generally not the cause of pneumonia that develops after COVID-19.⁴
4. Pneumococcal vaccines are important, however, and offer protection against a serious disease. The recommendations for dosing with these vaccines are complex, but generally speaking patients are eligible if they are older than 65 years.¹
5. Patients older than 65 years with unknown pneumococcal vaccination status are eligible to be vaccinated.⁵
6. Follow this link for the current pneumococcal vaccination recommendations: [Adult Immunization Schedule by Vaccine and Age Group | CDC](#). Pneumococcal is the 8th row from the top.



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References

1. "Pneumococcal Vaccination." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 24 Jan. 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/pneumo/index.html>.
2. "Pneumonia." *Mayo Clinic*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 13 June 2020, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pneumonia/symptoms-causes/syc-20354204>.
3. "Causes of Pneumonia." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 22 Oct. 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/pneumonia/causes.html>.
4. Adelman, Max W, et al. "Secondary Bacterial Pneumonias and Bloodstream Infections in Patients Hospitalized with Covid-19." *Annals of the American Thoracic Society*, American Thoracic Society, Sept. 2021, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8489870/>.
5. "Pneumococcal Vaccine Recommendations." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 24 Jan. 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/pneumo/hcp/recommendations.html>.



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