

Important Information about **Pneumonia** and **Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine***

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

What is PNEUMOCOCCAL PNEUMONIA?

- It is a bacterial infection of the lungs.
- It is more common during the winter months.
- It causes fever, chills, cough, soreness in the chest and back.
- Some people may develop a serious illness and require hospitalization.
- The bacteria spreads from person to person from secretions from the mouth and nose.

What is the Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine?

- The vaccine is given by injection.
- The vaccine will begin to provide its protective effect after about 2 to 3 weeks.
- The vaccine is very effective in preventing 23 of the most common types of pneumonia.
- The current recommendation is to be immunized only once. For certain people, re-vaccination is required. Ask your health care provider.

Who Should Receive the Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine?

- All persons 2 years of age or older with chronic:
 - Lung disease
 - Heart disease or stroke
 - Liver disease
 - Kidney disease
 - Diabetes
 - Spleen dysfunction or removal, sickle cell disease or sickle cell anemia
 - Immunosuppression
- All persons 65 years or older.
- All residents of nursing homes and homes for the aged.

CAUTION

SOME PEOPLE SHOULD CHECK WITH A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THIS VACCINE.

- People taking high doses of oral steroids or undergoing treatment for cancer.
- People who are receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy.

Who Should NOT Receive This Vaccine?

- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose of influenza or pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine.
- Children less than 2 years of age (They can receive pneumococcal conjugate vaccine.)

What to Expect Following Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine

People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.

Possible side effects from the vaccine are usually mild. They include:

- Soreness at the site of injection lasting 1 to 2 days.
- Occasionally fever for 1 to 2 days.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if you have certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your medical history before using either of these medications.

Questions:

If you have any questions regarding pneumonia or the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, please call your local Public Health Services Office, or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of

- the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness at www.immunize.cpha.ca
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

**Note: there are two types of pneumococcal vaccines. Pneumococcal polysaccharide is primarily for children and adults. Pneumococcal conjugate is primarily for infants.*