

# Pneumococcal Disease Information for Adults

## *What You Need to Know*

### The Disease:

Pneumococcal disease is an infection caused by the streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria. It is a severe illness, which causes 4,800 deaths every year in the United States. The bacteria lives in a person's nose and throat. It can spread to others, making it common throughout the year. The infection kills thousands of people in the United States each year, most of them are 65 years of age or older, or under two years of age.

### Who Pays?

It's **FREE**  
if you have  
Medicare part B!

Medicare part B will pay for both the pneumonia shot and the administration fee.

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Ask your doctor for more details.

### Types of Pneumococcal Disease:

<b>Lungs:</b>	<b>Referred to as <i>pneumonia</i></b>
<b>Blood Stream:</b>	<b>Also called <i>bacteremia</i></b>
<b>Brain:</b>	<b>Known as <i>meningitis</i></b>

### The Symptoms:

#### **Pneumonia**

- ◆ High fever
- ◆ Shaking chills
- ◆ Chest pain
- ◆ Varying levels of consciousness
- ◆ Cough with congestion
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Confusion

#### **Meningitis**

- ◆ Stiff neck
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Mental confusion or disorientation
- ◆ Visual sensitivity to light

#### **Bacteremia**

- ◆ Combination of symptoms - both pneumonia and meningitis
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Arthritis

### The Vaccine:

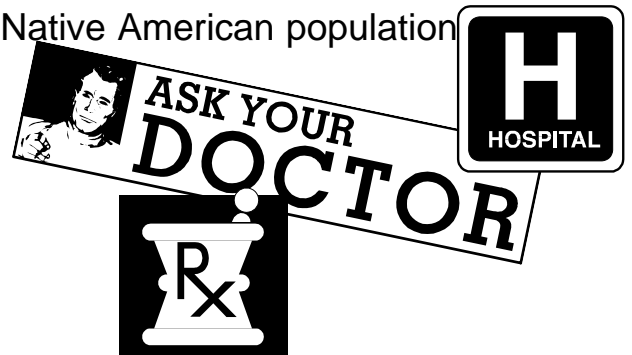
There is a vaccine available for older adults that protects against pneumococcal disease that's safe. Most adults only need one dose of the pneumococcal vaccine. Two doses may be needed if an adult received his/her first dose before age 65. The pneumonia vaccine works well in preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death.

## Who Should Get Vaccinated?

- ◆ People 65 years of age or older
- ◆ People with chronic disorders of the heart or lungs
- ◆ Residents of long term care facilities housing persons with chronic medical conditions and people in close contact with them
- ◆ Anyone who has a serious long-term health problem with heart disease, kidney disease, lung disease, metabolic disease (diabetes), anemia or other blood disorders;
- ◆ Anyone whose immune system is weakened because of HIV/AIDS, long-term treatment with drugs such as steroids, or cancer treatment with x-rays or drugs, and those who have had their spleen removed or whose spleen is dysfunctional due to an illness such as sickle cell disease;
- ◆ Physicians, nurses, family members or anyone else coming in close contact with people at risk of contracting pneumonia
- ◆ Alaskan Natives or those from certain Native American population

## Where to get a pneumonia shot?

- ◆ family doctor
- ◆ internist
- ◆ local health department
- ◆ local hospital (vaccination clinics)
- ◆ pharmacy (vaccination clinics)



## Who Pays?

It's **FREE** if you have Medicare part B! Medicare part B will pay for both the pneumonia shot and the administration fee. Ask your doctor for more details.

## Contact Information:

### North Carolina Immunization Branch

1-919-707-5550 • [www.immunizenc.com](http://www.immunizenc.com)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1-800-232-2522

### For vaccination clinics near you, call the American Lung Association

1-800-LUNG-USA • 1-800-586-4872

