



Important Information About Pneumococcal Disease and Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine

? What is pneumococcal disease?

- Pneumococcal disease is caused by a bacteria (streptococcus pneumoniae) known as pneumococcus.
- Many people carry the bacteria at the back of their throat or nose without getting sick.
- This bacteria sometimes overcomes the body's natural defenses and causes serious, even life threatening, diseases, including:
 - » Meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain)
 - » Bacteremia (a widespread infection involving the blood and multiple organs)
 - » Pneumonia (infection of the lungs)
- Pneumococcal bacteria also causes middle ear infections.
- These bacteria are also becoming resistant to some of the drugs used to treat them, so prevention of pneumococcal infections is more important than ever.
- Most pneumococcal disease is preventable through immunization.

? What is the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine?

- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine is intended for the prevention of pneumococcal disease.
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine provides protection against the most common strains of pneumococcal bacteria.

? Who should NOT receive the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine?

- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or any component of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 38.5°C/101.3°F or greater)

? Who should receive the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine?

The Nova Scotia schedule recommends this vaccine be given to:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies aged 2 months, 4 months, and 12 months as part of their routine immunizations. • Adults aged 65 and older who have not previously received a pneumococcal vaccine as part of the universal vaccination program for older adults. • Anyone between ages 2 months and 18 years, as well as adults aged 50 and older who have had asthma requiring acute medical care in the last 12 months. • Smokers aged 50 and older. • Anyone aged 2 months and older with the following high-risk medical or living conditions, as part of their pre-exposure immunization: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Cancers » Chronic cerebrospinal fluid leak » Chronic heart, liver, lung, or renal (kidney) disease » Chronic neurological diseases that may affect the person's ability to get rid of saliva in their mouth » Cochlear implants (including anyone scheduled to receive implants) » Congenital immunodeficiency » Cystic fibrosis » Diabetes » Hematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT) » HIV | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » People experiencing homelessness » Immunosuppressive therapy » Living in a long-term care facility » Living in communities or settings experiencing high invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) rates as determined by Public Health » Living in residential care for children with complex medical needs » Solid organ transplant » Spleen disorders including asplenia and other hemoglobinopathies » Substance use or harmful use of alcohol |
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IMMUNIZATION AFTERCARE

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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.



What are the possible side effects of the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine?

Many people have no side effects after immunization. However, some may have:

- Injection-site pain, redness and/or swelling. Your child may not want to use the arm or leg in which the needle was given as much as usual. This will go away in a few days.
- Fever, approximately four to six hours after the injection, but lasting no longer than 24 hours.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. Talk to your healthcare provider before using either of these medications as they are not recommended for people with certain medical conditions.

Call your healthcare provider if:

- A fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- A fever is 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher.
- A fever doesn't come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen are taken.
- Your child has convulsions.
- Other illness or symptoms occur.



Questions?

If you have any questions regarding pneumococcal disease or pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, please call your local Public Health office (see list of offices here: www.nshealth.ca/public-health) or your healthcare provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the following websites:

Nova Scotia Health Public Health
www.nshealth.ca/immunizations

Immunize Canada
immunize.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.canada.ca/public-health

Canadian Paediatric Society
cps.ca

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[811.novascotia.ca](tel:811-novascotia)