



Patient & Family Guide

2022

Pneumovax[®] 23 (Pneumococcal Vaccine Polyvalent) and Kidney Disease



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What is Pneumovax[®] 23?

- Pneumovax[®] 23 is a vaccine that protects against infections caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* bacteria. It works to protect against infections caused by the 23 most common types of this bacteria.
- This vaccine is safe.
- This vaccine does not contain any blood or living virus.
- The vaccine is injected with a needle, usually into the muscle in your upper arm.
- Most people only need to be vaccinated once. People with kidney disease are at a higher risk of infection and need a second dose after 5 years.

What are your questions?

Please ask. We are here to help you.

What is *Streptococcus pneumoniae*?

- *Streptococcus pneumoniae* is a type of bacteria.
- Many people carry it in the back of their throat or nose.
- The bacteria spreads from person to person by droplets when coughing or sneezing.
- This bacteria can cause many types of infections, some of which can be life-threatening.
- Infections commonly caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* include:
 - › **Pneumonia** – an infection in the lungs (also called a chest infection)
 - › **Meningitis** – an infection of the lining around the brain
 - › **Bacteremia** – an infection of the blood and organs
 - › **Sinusitis** – a sinus infection
 - › **Otitis media** – a middle ear infection

Why do I need to get vaccinated?

- Most infections caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* can be prevented with vaccination.
- Pneumovax® 23 is recommended for:
 - › People over the age of 65
 - › People who live in long-term care facilities
 - › People with chronic kidney disease and certain other medical conditions

What are the possible side effects of Pneumovax® 23?

Possible side effects include:

- Burning and/or stinging at the injection site at the time of injection. Usually this goes away in a few hours, but it may last for 1 or 2 days.
- Pain, swelling, and redness at the injection site. Usually this goes away in a few hours, but it may last for 1 or 2 days.
- Fever (temperature above 38⁰ C/100.4⁰ F). This can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®). If you are allergic to acetaminophen, talk with your primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner).

Who should not get Pneumovax® 23?

Do not get Pneumovax® 23 if you:

- › have a fever over 39.5° C/103.1° F.
- › are sick at the time of your appointment, other than with a cold.
- › have had a severe (very bad) allergic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine, or to any part of the vaccine.

Note: There are 2 types of pneumococcal vaccines:

- Pneumovax® 23 (pneumococcal vaccine polyvalent) is for:
 - › Adults over 65 years of age
 - › Adults under 65 years of age with certain medical conditions (like kidney disease).
- Prevnar® 13 (pneumococcal conjugate vaccine) is for adults with high-risk medical conditions (like organ transplant, low immune system, or taking immunosuppressant medications).

You may need both vaccines. Talk to your primary health care provider to find out which vaccine(s) is right for you.

When should I get each vaccine?

If you have not had ANY pneumococcal vaccines:

- › Get Prevnar® 13 first. Then wait at least 8 weeks before getting Pneumovax® 23.

If you have had Pneumovax® 23:

- › Wait at least 1 year before getting Prevnar® 13.
- › Wait at least 5 years before getting a second dose of Pneumovax® 23.

If you have had Prevnar® 13:

- › Wait at least 8 weeks before getting Pneumovax® 23.

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

