
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (Pneumo 23™)

What does this vaccine do?

Pneumo 23™ helps to protect against the 23 types of the Streptococcus Pneumoniae bacteria that account for most cases of Pneumococcal Pneumoniae. Pneumococcal disease can lead to infections of the lungs (pneumonia), the blood (bacteremia), and the covering of the brain (meningitis). This vaccine protects about 50 to 80 per cent of people against pneumococcal infection. This vaccine reduces the chance of getting the infection and for those who do become ill, it makes the disease milder.

When should you get this vaccine?

The best time to get this vaccine is when you turn age 65 or as soon as you develop a high-risk medical condition. For most people this vaccine is only given once. Only a few people will need a second dose. This vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Who should get the vaccine?

1. All persons 65 years of age and older.
2. All residents of nursing homes, homes for the aged and chronic care facilities or wards.
3. All persons two years of age or older who have any of the following high-risk medical conditions:
 - Chronic heart, kidney, or lung disease (not asthma)
 - Cirrhosis of the liver
 - Alcoholism
 - Chronic renal disease
 - Nephrotic syndrome
 - Diabetes mellitus
 - Chronic cerebrospinal fluid leak
 - HIV infection or AIDS
 - Other diseases that suppress the immune system
 - Sickle cell disease
 - No spleen or a spleen that does not work right

Who should not get the vaccine?

1. Children under two years of age
2. All persons who have received Pneumo 23™ vaccine in the last three years
3. All persons who have received two Pneumo 23™ in the past
4. All persons who have an acute illness or fever (not a mild upper respiratory infection) on the day the needle is to be given
5. All persons who have an allergy to any component of Pneumo 23™
6. All persons who have had an allergic or anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of Pneumo 23™
7. Pneumo 23™ should be given to a pregnant woman only if clearly needed

Pneumo 23™ (continued)

What are the risks from the vaccine?

Most people who get the vaccine have either no side effects or mild side effects (soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site). Occasionally, a slight fever may occur. Other side effects like headache, a higher fever, tiredness, joint pain, muscle aches, and rash occur rarely. Life-threatening allergic reactions are very rare.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor or seek medical attention if any of the following occur after getting the Pneumo 23™ vaccine:

- Hives
- Swelling of the mouth or throat
- Trouble breathing, hoarseness or wheezing
- Paleness, weakness, a fast heartbeat or dizziness
- Any other unusual condition or serious reaction to the vaccine



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