

What to Know About Pneumococcal Vaccines for Children and Adolescents

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Pneumococcal disease is caused by the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and can lead to severe infections like pneumonia, meningitis, and bloodstream infections. These infections can be particularly dangerous for certain populations, including older adults, young children, and those with chronic health conditions.¹

Pneumococcal vaccination helps prevent severe infections that can lead to hospitalization or even death. Being vaccinated reduces the risk of complications from pneumococcal disease, especially in children.

Children 2-18 Years Old With a Risk Condition

➔ According to the CDC, children and adolescents (2-18 years of age) may need more than the routine childhood pneumococcal vaccine doses if they have certain risk conditions. The type of pneumococcal vaccine and number of doses needed depend on the child's age, the specific condition they have, and the vaccines they've already received.

My child or adolescent has a risk condition and may need additional vaccination against pneumococcal disease. What steps should I take to ensure they are up to date with their vaccines?

➔ If an individual 18 years of age or younger has a qualifying risk condition, pneumococcal vaccines are often available at pediatric and family practice offices. For those who are uninsured or eligible, vaccines may be available for free through the Vaccines For Children (VFC) Program.²

If your child or adolescent has any of the below conditions, talk to their healthcare provider to ensure their pneumococcal vaccines are up to date:

- ▶ Cerebrospinal fluid leak
- ▶ Chronic liver disease
- ▶ Cochlear implant
- ▶ Immunocompromising condition
- ▶ Diabetes mellitus
- ▶ HIV infection
- ▶ Chronic kidney disease, excluding maintenance dialysis or nephrotic syndrome
- ▶ Congenital or acquired asplenia, or splenic dysfunction
- ▶ Maintenance dialysis or nephrotic syndrome
- ▶ Chronic lung disease
- ▶ Sickle cell disease or other hemoglobinopathy
- ▶ Diseases or conditions treated with immunosuppressive drugs or radiation therapy
- ▶ Chronic heart disease

If you have any questions about pneumococcal vaccines or whether your child or adolescent has eligible risk conditions, please talk to a healthcare provider.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/about/index.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-for-children/about/index.html>