CVEEP

Healthy Holidays Start Now: Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones

The holiday season is a time for gathering with family and friends. It is also a time of year when respiratory illnesses like the flu, COVID-19, RSV, and pneumococcal disease can spread more easily.

Don't let illness interrupt your holiday plans. Getting vaccinated can help protect you and your loved ones from severe outcomes so you can focus on making memories together.

Vaccines are Covered – Free of Cost to You

Recommended vaccines are available from public health plans like Medicare, Medicaid, TRICARE, and private insurers free of cost to you.

Prepare Ahead of Time

Before the holiday season begins, take a moment to check that you're up to date with recommended vaccines. Respiratory illnesses can spread during winter months and getting vaccinated before holiday gatherings gives your body time to build protection against serious illness. A healthcare provider can help you understand what vaccines are right for you and your family.

Talk with your healthcare provider about which vaccines are recommended for you, find a vaccination location near you, and use our appointment checklist to help prepare for your visit.

Learn What Vaccines Are Recommended for You

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and leading medical societies recommend the following vaccines based on age, health conditions, and other factors:

COVID-19

2026-2027 COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for individuals 6 months and older based on age and health status.

For adults:

- CDC and leading medical societies recommend COVID-19 vaccination for all adults.
- Vaccination is especially important for people at increased risk for COVID-19.

For pregnant women:

- CDC and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommend COVID-19 vaccination for pregnant women.
- Pregnancy increases the risk for severe outcomes from COVID-19. Talk to your healthcare provider about what is right for you.

For children:

- CDC recommends vaccination for those 6 months – 17 years who are immunocompromised, or through shared clinical decision-making
- Leading medical societies recommend vaccination for all young children
  - * All young children 6-23 months
  - * Children 2-18 years in certain risk groups or if desired

Different COVID-19 vaccines are available for different age groups, and the number of doses recommended may vary based on age, health and vaccination history.

Flu

Flu vaccines are recommended for people 6 months and older, including pregnant women, to help lower the risk of serious illness.

Pneumococcal Disease

Pneumococcal vaccines are recommended for all children younger than 5 years and all adults 50 years or older.

Additional protection is also recommended for some children and adults with certain medical conditions that increase their risk of pneumococcal disease.

- Children ages 2-18 may need pneumococcal vaccines beyond the routine childhood series depending on age, vaccination history, and health condition (e.g., chronic heart, liver, kidney, and lung disease including some cases of asthma, weakened immune systems, and cochlear implants)
- Adults 19 – 49 may be recommended to receive pneumococcal vaccines depending on vaccination history and health condition (e.g., chronic heart, liver, kidney and lung disease, diabetes, and cigarette smoking).

RSV

For adults ages 50 and older:

A single dose of RSV vaccine is recommended for:

- All adults age 75 and older.
- Adults ages 50-74 who are at increased risk of severe illness from RSV (such as those with chronic heart, liver, kidney and lung disease, diabetes, obesity, or those who are residents of long-term care facilities).

RSV season can vary around the country. If you live in Alaska, Florida, or outside the continental U.S., talk to a healthcare provider about when RSV season is expected where you live.

For infants:

- Either maternal RSV vaccination or infant immunization is recommended to help prevent severe illness from RSV in infants.
  * Pregnant women can receive an RSV vaccine between 32–36 weeks of pregnancy during RSV season to protect their infants at birth.

    CDC recommends vaccination from September through January in most of the continental United States. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends extending vaccination from September 1 through March 1 for eligible pregnant individuals. Talk to your healthcare provider about the timing that is right for you.
  * If a child's mother does not receive an RSV vaccine during pregnancy, a preventive antibody can be given after birth to infants younger than 8 months entering their first RSV season.

For young children:

- Preventive antibodies are also available for young children ages 8-19 months who are at increased risk for severe illness from RSV and entering their second RSV season.

Avoid Severe Illness and Enjoy the Season

Getting vaccinated can mean the difference between a mild infection and a severe illness. A case of flu, COVID-19, RSV, or pneumococcal disease can lead to lingering health issues that last long after the decorations are packed away.

Vaccination can help lower these risks during the holidays and beyond.

Protect Those You Love

Staying up to date with recommended vaccines is one of the best ways to help protect your health this holiday season, especially when spending time with loved ones who may be more likely to get seriously sick. This includes babies, older adults, and people with certain health conditions.



For more information about which vaccines are recommended for you, talk to your healthcare provider or visit:

- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)

cveep.org

UPDATED: 11/2026