



Pneumonia Prevention

*University of
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*Information
for Patients*

Pneumonia (nu-MO-nya) is an infection in the lungs. It causes the air sacs in the lungs to fill with fluid, making it hard for you to breathe.

Here are some basic things you can do to lower your risk for getting pneumonia:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Don't smoke, and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Stay away from those who have a cold or the flu.
- Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.
- Stay active.

Should I get a pneumonia vaccine?

The pneumonia vaccine helps your body fight pneumococcal (nu-mo-KOCK-al) bacteria, which attacks the lungs and can cause pneumonia. When certain conditions exist, the level of protection offered by this vaccine may decrease. You may need to get this vaccine again. If you received your first vaccine before the age of 65 and more than 5 years have passed, you should be revaccinated.

Your doctor may recommend a pneumonia vaccine for you if:

- you are age 65 or older
- you are recovering from a severe illness
- you have a chronic illness such as lung disease, heart disease, kidney disease, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, alcoholism, cirrhosis, leaks of cerebral spinal fluid, or if you have a disease or take a drug that lowers the body's resistance to infection

The pneumonia vaccine is **not** recommended for those who:

- currently have an infection
- are pregnant
- are younger than age 2

Some people have allergic reactions to the pneumonia vaccine. Talk to your doctor if you have had an allergic reaction to any drug in the past.

PNEUMONIA PREVENTION

Get a flu shot

Because viral pneumonia may develop from influenza, a yearly flu shot can help prevent pneumonia. Talk to your doctor to see if a flu shot can help you.

For more information

For more information about the pneumococcal vaccine, refer to the CDC pneumococcal vaccine information sheet at <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/vis/vis-ppv.pdf>.

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Questions?

Call _____ if you have any questions about this information.



UPMC

University of Pittsburgh
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For help in finding a doctor or health service that suits your needs, call the UPMC Referral Service at 412-647-UPMC (8762) or 1-800-533-UPMC (8762).

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