

Pneumococcal Disease

Description

A type of bacteria

Symptoms

Pneumococcal pneumonia (high fever, cough, and shortness of breath), bacteremia (fever and feeling generally poorly), and meningitis (fever, headache, thinking slowly or not clearly)

Complications

Death (one of the most common causes of death in America from a vaccine-preventable disease)

Transmission

Pneumococcus is in many people's noses and throats and is spread by coughing, sneezing, or contact with respiratory secretions. Why it suddenly invades the body and causes disease is unknown.

Vaccine

Pneumococcal vaccine is very good at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death. However it is not guaranteed to prevent all symptoms in all people.

Who Needs It?

As an adult, do I need it? (immunization schedule)

You should get the pneumococcal vaccine if:

- * You are 65 years old or older.
- * You have a serious long-term health problem such as heart disease, sickle cell disease, alcoholism, leaks of cerebrospinal fluid, lung disease (not including asthma), diabetes, or liver cirrhosis.
- * Your resistance to infection is lowered due to Hodgkin's disease; multiple myeloma; cancer treatment with x-rays or drugs; treatment with long-term steroids; bone marrow or organ transplant; kidney failure; HIV/AIDS; lymphoma, leukemia, or other cancers; nephrotic syndrome; damaged spleen or no spleen.
- * You are an Alaskan Native or from certain Native American populations.

Does my child need it? (immunization schedule)

Your child should get the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine if:

- * He/she is less than 2 years old.

- * He/she is at least 2 years old but less than 5 years old AND he/she has a serious long-term health problem such as heart disease, sickle cell disease, leaks of cerebrospinal fluid, lung disease (not including asthma), diabetes, or liver disease.

- * He/she is at least 2 years old but less than 5 years old AND his/her resistance to infection is lowered due to Hodgkin's disease; cancer treatment with x-rays or drugs; treatment with long-term steroids; bone marrow or organ transplant; kidney failure; HIV/AIDS; lymphoma, leukemia, or other cancers; nephrotic syndrome; damaged spleen or no spleen.

- * He/she is at least 2 years old but less than 5 years old AND he/she is an Alaskan Native, American Indian, African American, or he/she attends a group day care center.