

What You Need to Know About COPD, Asthma and Adult Vaccines

Each year thousands of adults in the United States suffer serious health problems from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines — some people are hospitalized, and some even die. People with asthma or COPD are at higher risk for serious problems from certain vaccine-preventable diseases.

Vaccines are important for you.

There are many reasons why vaccines are especially important for people with COPD or asthma. Here are just a few:

- Adults with COPD or asthma are at increased risk of complications from the flu. **That's why a flu vaccine every year is important.**
- COPD and asthma cause your airways to swell and become blocked with mucus which can make it hard to breathe. Certain vaccine-preventable diseases can also increase the swelling of your airways and lungs. The combination of the two can lead to pneumonia and other serious respiratory illness. **That is why it is important to make sure you are up-to-date on your flu, pneumococcal, and Tdap (whooping cough) vaccines.**

Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health.

- **Vaccines are tested and monitored.** Vaccines are tested before being licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and FDA continue to monitor vaccines after they are licensed.
- **Vaccine side effects are usually mild and temporary.** The most common side effects include soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site. Severe side effects are very rare.
- **Vaccines are safe to get, even if you are taking prescription medications.** In fact, they are an important part of staying healthy especially if you have a chronic condition like COPD or asthma.



What vaccines do you need?

Whether you have COPD or asthma, there are a number of vaccines recommended for you:

- **Flu vaccine** every year to protect against seasonal flu
- **Pneumococcal vaccine** to protect against serious pneumococcal diseases

In addition, all adults need:

- **Tdap vaccine** to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough)
- **Zoster vaccine** to protect against shingles if you are 60 years or older

There may be other vaccines you need so be sure to talk with your healthcare professional about what's right for you.

**DON'T WAIT.
VACCINATE!**



Getting adult vaccines can be easier than you think.

You may regularly see your COPD or asthma specialist, and maybe your primary care provider. Either is a great place to start! Many carry vaccines recommended for people with COPD or asthma. If your doctor or other healthcare professional does not offer the vaccines you need, ask for a referral so you can get the vaccines elsewhere.

Adults can get vaccines at doctors' offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, and health departments. To find a place near you to get a vaccine, go to <http://vaccine.healthmap.org>.

Most health insurance plans cover recommended vaccines. Check with your insurance provider for details and for a list of vaccine providers covered by your plan. If you do not have health insurance, visit www.healthcare.gov to learn more about health insurance options.

Don't Wait. Vaccinate!

Talk with your healthcare professional to make sure you are up-to-date with the vaccines recommended for you.

DON'T WAIT. VACCINATE!

Talk with your healthcare professional to make sure you are up-to-date with the vaccines recommended for you.

For more information on vaccines or to take an adult vaccine quiz to find out which vaccines you might need, go to www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults.

