



WORD to the WISE:
Immunize for Good Adult Health



Immunize
Georgia



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Common Questions About Adult Immunizations and Good Health

What are immunizations?

- ▶ Immunizations, also known as vaccinations or shots, are a form of medicine made to protect you from harmful and fatal diseases.

Are immunizations safe?

- ▶ Yes, however, no vaccine is fully without risk.
- ▶ The chance of getting a disease and suffering its complications is greater than the chance of risk after receiving the vaccine itself.
- ▶ All licensed vaccines are tested many times to ensure their safety.

Aren't immunizations just for children?

- ▶ No, vaccines are for everyone, not just children. In fact, there are some vaccines that are specifically recommended for adults to protect against diseases that are more common in adulthood.
- ▶ Vaccines help reduce your risk of getting diseases like shingles, pneumococcal, flu, hepatitis A and B, and whooping cough.
- ▶ By getting vaccinated, not only do you protect yourself – you also protect those you love.

How do I pay for immunizations?

- ▶ Most health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines, including Medicaid and Medicare Part B. Check with your insurance provider for details and for a list of vaccine providers.
- ▶ If you do not have health insurance, visit [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) to learn more about health coverage options.

Where can I get immunized?

- ▶ Adults can get vaccines at doctors' offices, pharmacies, community health clinics, public health departments, and other locations. To find a vaccine provider near you, go to vaccine.healthmap.org.

How do I find what vaccine(s), if any, I will need when traveling internationally?

- ▶ Visit [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel) to find what vaccines you may need when traveling internationally.



Vaccinations for Adults



Type of Vaccine	For Whom it is Recommended (Age 19 years and older)
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults who have a damaged spleen or have had their spleen removed (including sickle cell disease), HIV infection, antibody and complement deficiency syndromes, cancer requiring treatment with chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or bone marrow stem cell transplant (HSCT)* The vaccine is given in 1 or 3 doses, depending on the medical condition
Hepatitis A (Hep A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults who want protection from hepatitis A or have a specific risk factor for hepatitis A* such as those who have chronic liver disease, sexual exposure, clotting factor disorders, men who have sex with men, injection or non-injection drug use, homelessness, work with hepatitis A virus, close personal contact with international adoptee, or travelers to countries where hepatitis A is common The vaccine is usually given in 2 doses, 6-12 months apart or 3 doses if the combination vaccine for HepA-HepB (Twinrix) is used
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults who want protection from hepatitis B or have a specific risk factor for hepatitis B* such as Hepatitis C virus infection, chronic liver disease, HIV infection, sexual exposure, current or recent injection drug use, household contacts of persons chronically infected with hepatitis B, incarcerated persons and travelers to countries where hepatitis B is common The vaccine is usually given in 2 or 3 doses, depending on the brand; 3 doses needed if the combination vaccine for HepA-HepB (Twinrix) is used
Herpes Zoster (shingles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults 50 years or older should get 2 doses of the shingles vaccine brand Shingrix, even if previously vaccinated with Zostava
Human papillomavirus vaccination (HPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All unvaccinated or partially vaccinated adults through 26 years of age, adults with immunocompromising conditions (including HIV infection), men who have sex with men and transgender persons* The vaccine is given in 3 doses over a 6-month period
Influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adults with no medical contraindications; preferably annually by the end of October or anytime during the flu season 1 dose per year, because the flu virus changes from year to year
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults born in 1957 or later, if not previously vaccinated or who have no evidence of immunity, adults in high-risk groups, such as health care workers, students, and travelers may be required to be vaccinated regardless of age* 1 or 2 doses may be required
Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults need MenACWY vaccine if they have a damaged spleen or their spleen has been removed, sickle cell disease, traveling to countries where meningococcal disease is common, first-year college students who live in residential housing (if not previously vaccinated at age 16 years or older), and military recruits* 1 or 2 doses may be required
Meningococcal B (MenB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults through age 23 years (even without high-risk medical conditions), adults with a damaged spleen or whose spleen has been removed, and adults with immunocompromising conditions may be routinely vaccinated with MenB* The vaccine is given in 2 or 3 doses, depending on the brand
Pneumococcal (PCV13, PPSV23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults age 65 years or older need both pneumococcal vaccines. Adults 19 through 64 years old with certain high-risk conditions* such as HIV, chronic heart, lung or kidney disease, diabetes, a weakened immune system, damaged or removed spleen, chronic alcoholism, cigarette smoking, cerebrospinal fluid leak, or cochlear implant need one or both vaccines. Get Prevnar (PCV13) first and then get Pneumovax (PPSV23) at least one year later. Revaccination in 3 years to 5 years may be indicated for persons at high-risk.*
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap) (Td)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults who have not received Tdap or whose Tdap history is unknown need 1 dose of Tdap. All pregnant women need to get a dose of Tdap with each pregnancy; preferably in the early part of gestational weeks 27-36. A Td booster dose is recommended every 10 years, or sooner for wound care management.
Varicella (chickenpox)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> U.S.-born adults in 1980 or later who have never had chickenpox or no evidence of immunity to varicella, health care personnel (regardless of age), or adults with certain medical conditions may need 1 or 2 doses*

*Consult your health care professional to determine your level of risk and need for these vaccines.

Adults Need to Be Immunized Against These Diseases



Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) is a type of bacteria that can cause many different kinds of infections. These infections range from mild ear infections to severe diseases that can become invasive like pneumonia, meningitis and/or bloodstream infections. Invasive disease is usually severe, requiring treatment in a hospital and can sometimes result in death.

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious viral infection of the liver and is found in the stool of infected people. Symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, jaundice, diarrhea, fatigue, stomach pain, dark urine and appetite loss.

Hepatitis B causes liver damage, cancer or even death. It is spread through sexual intercourse and sharing needles used for drugs, tattoos or body piercings. It can pass to others when no symptoms are present and can also be passed from an infected mother to her child during childbirth.

Herpes Zoster (shingles) is a painful skin rash, often with blisters. The rash usually appears on one side of the face or body and lasts from 2 weeks to 4 weeks. Symptoms include severe pain, fever, headache, chills and upset stomach.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States. Early protection against HPV is important because HPV can cause genital warts and many types of cancer in both men and women.

Influenza is a virus that can cause high fever, chills, dry cough, and several more symptoms that can result in severe sickness and in some cases, even death.

(MMR)

Measles causes a high fever and rash. It can lead to middle-ear infections, swelling of the brain and pneumonia.

Mumps causes painful swelling of the cheeks and jaw. It can also cause swelling of the brain or spinal cord membranes.

Rubella (German measles) causes swollen glands and a red rash. In a pregnant woman, it can harm the unborn baby.

Meningococcal Disease is caused by bacteria that infects the spinal cord, brain or bloodstream.

Pneumococcal Disease is a bacterial infection that can result in middle ear infection, pneumonia (lung infection), and meningitis (infection of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord). Some complications can lead to brain damage or hearing loss.

(Tdap) (Td)

Tetanus (lockjaw) results when an open wound becomes infected with tetanus germs, causing muscles to go into spasm.

Diphtheria causes a severe throat infection that prevents swallowing or breathing. It can also cause heart failure or paralysis.

Pertussis in adults can cause a cough that lasts for months. Adults can spread this disease to infants and young children. Pertussis in younger ages can be severe and result in death.

Varicella (chickenpox) can cause serious health problems such as skin infections, pneumonia and in rare cases, brain swelling.



Important Reasons for Adults to Get Vaccinated

- ▶ Each year thousands of adults in the United States get sick from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines – some people are hospitalized, and some even die.
- ▶ Even if you got all your vaccines as a child, the protection from some vaccines can wear off over time. You may also be at risk for other diseases due to your age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health conditions.
- ▶ Vaccines lower your chance of getting sick. Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses to lower the chances of getting certain diseases as well as suffering complications from these diseases.
- ▶ There are many things you want to pass on to your loved ones; a vaccine preventable disease is not one of them. Infants, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems (like those undergoing cancer treatment) are especially vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases.
- ▶ Vaccine side effects are usually mild and go away on their own. Severe side effects are very rare.