

Vaccines for Adults

Influenza Vaccine

Flu is caused by influenza viruses and is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing, and close contact with infected persons.

Symptoms come on suddenly and may last several days consisting of: fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, cough, headache, and runny nose.

Flu can make some people much sicker than others. Young children, people age 65 years and older, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions — such as heart, lung or kidney disease, nervous system disorders, or weakened immune systems have the highest risk of having complications from the flu. Flu vaccination is particularly important for these persons and anyone in close contact with them.

Flu can lead to pneumonia, and make existing medical conditions worse. It can increase the risk of having a heart attack. Complications from the flu are one of the most common causes of death in the elderly.

Each year thousands of people in the United States are hospitalized or die from flu. A yearly flu shot can help prevent this.

Pneumococcal Vaccines

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria that can spread from person to person through close contact. It can cause ear infections and serious infections of the lungs (pneumonia), blood (bacteremia), the covering of the brain (encephalitis) and spinal cord (meningitis). Meningitis can cause deafness, brain damage and can be fatal.

Anyone can get pneumococcal disease, but children under 2 years of age, people with certain medical conditions, adults over age 65 years, and cigarette smokers are at the highest risk.

About 18,000 older adults die each year from pneumococcal disease in the United States. Treatment of pneumococcal infections with penicillin and other antibiotics used to be effective. Now some strains of pneumonia have become resistant to these drugs. This makes prevention of the disease through vaccination even more important.

There are two types of pneumococcal vaccines that are recommended to protect against several different strains of germs that can cause pneumonia – Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV13 or Prevnar) and Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (PPSV23 or Pneumovax). You need both vaccines to be covered. Both are generally given one time after the age of 65. People with certain medical conditions may get the pneumonia vaccines before 65 if recommended by their doctor.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis Vaccine

Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are very serious diseases. These diseases are caused by bacteria. Adults need to have a vaccination one time with all three vaccines – the Tdap. After this a Td (tetanus diphtheria) vaccine is recommended every 10 years. Diphtheria and pertussis are spread from person to person through secretions from coughing or sneezing.

Tetanus enters the body through cuts, scratches, or wounds.

TETANUS is rare in the United States today. It causes painful muscle tightening and stiffness all over the body. It can lead to tightening of muscles in the head and neck so you can't open your mouth, swallow or sometimes even breathe. Tetanus kills about 1 out of 10 people who are infected even after receiving the best medical care. Older adults who do not stay current on their tetanus vaccinations are at increased risk of tetanus disease. Tetanus spores that cause disease can be inside or outside your home.

DIPHTHERIA is also rare in the United States today. It can cause a thick coating to form in the back of the throat. It can lead to breathing problems, heart failure, paralysis and death.

PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough) causes severe coughing spells for many weeks, which can lead to difficulty breathing, vomiting and disturbed sleep. It can also result in weight loss, incontinence and rib fractures. Up to two in 100 adolescents and five in 100 adults with pertussis are hospitalized with complications, which can include pneumonia and death. Babies are at risk before they have had all of their needed immunizations. Pertussis disease is present in our community and is a contagious disease.

Shingles Vaccine

Shingles is a painful skin rash, often with blisters. It is also called Herpes Zoster. A shingles rash usually appears on one side of the face or body and lasts from two to four weeks. The pain along the nerve pathways can be quite severe. Other possible symptoms of shingles include fever, headache, chills and upset stomach. Very rarely, a shingles infection can lead to pneumonia, hearing problems, blindness, brain inflammation or death.

About one in five people will experience severe pain long after the rash clears up. This is called post-herpetic neuralgia.

Shingles is caused by the Varicella Zoster virus, the same virus that causes chickenpox. Only someone who has had chickenpox in the past can get shingles disease. The chickenpox virus stays in your body after you have had the disease and can cause shingles many years later. Children now receive varicella vaccine to help prevent chickenpox disease.

Shingles is most common in people 50 years of age and older. It is more likely to occur in people whose immune systems are weakened because of a disease such as cancer or who are taking drugs such as steroids, immunosuppressive medications or chemotherapy. Check with your doctor about receiving the vaccine if you have these health issues. At least 1 million people a year in the United States get shingles.

Your doctor may have these vaccinations available or the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment may be able to provide them. Call 913-826-1261 or go [online](#) for information.

Information adapted from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/current-vis.html>



Walk-in Immunization Clinics – No appointment needed

11875 S. Sunset Drive, Ste. 300, Olathe, KS 66061

6000 Lamar Ave., Ste. 140, Mission, KS 66202

Phone: 913-826-1200; www.jocogov.org/jcdhe

[Facebook](#): @jocohealthdept; [Twitter](#): @JOCOHealth

[Instagram](#): @jocohealthdept; [Pinterest](#): @JCDHEKS