**About Adult Vaccinations**

Vaccination has been listed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as one of the ten greatest health achievements of the 20th century in the United States. No matter what age you are or what stage in life you are in, it is important to talk to your doctor, pharmacist or other health care provider about vaccines for you and your family and about any concerns you may have.

**Why are vaccinations recommended for adults?**

You know vaccinations are important for children. Did you know that there are also vaccines recommended for healthy adults? Vaccines can reduce the risk of sickness, disability and death in all adult populations, not just those that are high risk.

As you age, you may be at risk for new and different diseases that can be serious and even deadly. Your immune system simply can’t fight off diseases like it used to. Vaccines can help protect you by preventing some of these diseases from occurring. Also, some vaccinations received in childhood lose their effectiveness as the years go by and require a “booster” to maintain maximum protection.

**What types of vaccines are typically recommended for adults?**

When was the last time you were vaccinated for influenza, pertussis, pneumonia and shingles? These are fairly common or on the rise among adults in the U.S. and may be prevented with vaccinations. There are other recommendations for adults, which are based on a variety of factors. Consult with your doctor if you haven’t checked your immunization record in awhile. *For e-versions, add: Click* [*here*](http://www.cdc.gov/features/adultvaccinations/) *for ten reasons to get vaccinated from the CDC.*

**How do I know which vaccines I need?**

Talk with your doctor or other health care provider. They will consider the following questions:

* How old are you?
* What is your current health status?
* Are you pregnant?
* What type of work do you do?
* What is your current living situation (i.e. student living in residence; caring for someone who is elderly or in poor health; childcare worker)
* Do you plan to travel internationally?

*For e-versions, add*: *Take this* [*quiz*](http://www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched/) *to better understand the vaccines you need.*

**Why are many adults not getting the recommended vaccinations?**

Many people are unaware that vaccines are recommended for healthy adults or they do not completely understand the health risks that come with diseases that can be prevented with a vaccine. Some may question the overall safety and effectiveness of vaccination. If you’re not sure, ask your doctor about the importance of vaccinations for you.

**(BOX) How do I know that vaccines are safe and effective?**

To ensure today’s vaccines are safe and effective, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tests them before they are licensed. Both the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the FDA monitor vaccines after they are licensed. *For e-versions, add: Click on this* [*link*](http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines/) *for more information from the FDA.*

**Do I have to pay out-of-pocket for recommended vaccinations?**

Your preventive services benefits cover routine vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This means there is no copay or coinsurance for vaccines including flu, tetanus, meningitis and hepatitis A and B. For more information, contact your human resources/benefits department or visit cdc.gov/vaccines/.

**NOTE: Employers can add company-specific promos here, i.e. for flu shots.**

 **Article Option: Flu shot-specific information**

**Myths & Facts About Getting A Flu Shot**

Do you worry that a flu shot will give you the flu? Maybe you’re concerned about side effects? There are many myths about flu shots that often keep people from taking advantage of this easy and effective way to fight the flu each year. Do these sound familiar?

***Myth #1:*** *The flu shot is expensive. I can’t afford to get one.*

**Fact:** Flu vaccines are now available to you at no cost through your preventive benefits coverage. This means no out-of-pocket costs – no copay or coinsurance – even if you haven’t met your yearly deductible yet.

***Myth #2:*** *I don’t need a flu shot – I’ve never gotten the flu.*

**Fact:** No one is immune to flu viruses. Whether you’ve had the flu before or not, a flu shot is the single best way to protect you against the flu each year.

***Myth #3:*** *A flu shot will give me the flu.*

**Fact:** The flu vaccine contains killed viruses that cannot cause infection. So the flu shot will not give you the flu.

***Myth #4:*** *I have allergies so I cannot get a flu shot.*

**Fact:** Most allergies are not a reason to opt out. If you’ve had a serious reaction to the flu vaccine in the past, or if you are allergic to chicken eggs, you should not get a flu shot. Otherwise, flu shots are very safe.

***Myth #5:*** *The flu shot causes serious side effects.*

**Fact:** A small number of people report minor discomfort including a sore arm, slight fever or fatigue. However the majority of people who get the flu shot have no side effects at all.

A yearly flu shot is an easy and effective way to prevent the flu. Flu season usually begins in December, so getting your shot in October or November means your body has time to become immune to the flu virus before the season is in full swing. *For e-versions, add: For more info about preventing the flu, click* [*here*](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm%5D)*.*

**NOTE: Employers can add company-specific promos here, i.e. for on-site flu shots or flu clinics.**