

START YOUR NEW

# Season of Wellness



**A GUIDE TO  
Vaccinations for  
Healthy Aging**



**The Eldercare Locator can connect you with community providers in your area to help you get your recommended vaccines.** These local organizations deliver a range of programs that help you access vaccines such as outreach programs, vaccine clinics, transportation programs and even in-home vaccinations for those who may need it.

**FIND  
VACCINE  
PROVIDERS  
NEAR YOU**

**Call/Text/Video Call:**  
1-800-677-1116

**Visit:**  
[eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov)







**There's so much to look forward to every winter season.** Socializing with friends, visiting family and loved ones, volunteering and enjoying the arts are just a few of the things we all can look forward to.



**But the one thing no one ever looks forward to is a serious illness.** That's why staying healthy should always be a top priority, regardless of age. And keeping up with your vaccinations is a cornerstone of healthy aging. The **Eldercare Locator** helps older adults, caregivers and families find local, community resources that can help make getting vaccinated easy.

### **Live Healthy. Age Well.**

Managing your health is a lifelong journey that involves prioritizing fitness, eating well, nurturing social connections and attending routine medical check-ups. Staying up to date on recommended vaccinations is a vital part of healthy aging, too!

### **Get Vaccinated**

Vaccines are safe and help prevent serious illness. Staying up to date with vaccines not only protects your health, but it protects your loved ones and others in your community. As we age, our immune systems may gradually weaken, increasing our vulnerability to specific illnesses. That's why it's crucial that all of us, especially adults age 60 and older, stay up to date with vaccines.

### **GET RELIABLE INFORMATION**

When it comes to taking care of your health, it's important to seek out trustworthy sources for accurate information. Talk to a health care professional before you believe what you see or hear from others. Relying on medical professionals and reputable sources like your local Area Agency on Aging, Title VI Native American Aging Program or State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) is your best defense against inaccurate information and confusion. SHIPs offer trustworthy, local, in-depth and objective guidance to Medicare-eligible people, their families and caregivers.



# Recommended Vaccines for Older Adults

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## Seasonal Flu

Flu, short for influenza, is a virus that can lead to fever, chills, sore throat, nasal congestion, headaches and muscle aches, as well as potentially serious complications. Older adults face a greater risk of developing serious flu complications, including pneumonia. To stay protected, get your flu vaccine in the fall each year, ensuring you're ready for flu season.

## COVID-19

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that causes symptoms such as fever, cough and shortness of breath. In older adults, the disease can lead to serious illness and death. Everyone six months and older should get an updated COVID-19 vaccine. People who are immunocompromised may need additional doses of the updated COVID-19 vaccines and should speak with a health care professional. Getting an updated vaccine helps protect you from getting very sick from COVID-19.

## RSV

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can be dangerous for certain adults. Older adults who get very sick from the RSV infection may need to be hospitalized,

and the illness can even be life-threatening. If you are age 60 or older, talk to your health care provider about whether an RSV vaccine is right for you.

## Pneumococcal

Pneumococcal disease can cause serious infections such as pneumonia or a bloodstream infection. Older adults are at increased risk for getting these infections. CDC recommends that all adults age 65 and older get vaccinated against pneumococcal disease. The number of doses recommended will depend on which pneumococcal vaccines you receive and when. Talk with a health care professional to find out what is best for you.

## Shingles

Shingles is a painful, usually itchy rash that develops on one side of the face or the body. Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox and as we get older, the virus can reactivate as shingles and cause serious complications such as long-term nerve pain, especially for older adults. Anyone who had chickenpox is at risk for having shingles. Adults age 50 and older should get two doses of the shingles vaccine two to six months apart.

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***Check with a health care professional to see if there are additional vaccines that are right for you. The Eldercare Locator can help you get your vaccines by connecting you to community providers in your area.***

# Stay Healthy with Local Resources

## Eldercare Locator

Connecting older adults and their families to local services and supports. Call, text or video call 1-800-677-1116, or visit [eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov).



## Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL)

Connecting people with disabilities to local community resources. Call, text or video call 1-888-677-1199 or visit [dial.acl.gov](http://dial.acl.gov).



## U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Connecting people with health information, including vaccination recommendations. Call 1-800-232-4636 or visit [cdc.gov/cdc-info](http://cdc.gov/cdc-info) or [www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched/](http://www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultimmsched/).

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**Are Vaccines Safe?** Yes. The United States' long-standing vaccine safety system ensures that vaccines are as safe as possible. For example, hundreds of millions of Americans have safely received seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

**Do Vaccinations Cause Side Effects?** Vaccines can have side effects. But when side effects occur they are usually mild or moderate. The most common side effects are fever, tiredness, body aches, or redness, swelling and tenderness where the shot was given.

**Why Should I Get Vaccinated?** Getting vaccinated is the best way to reduce the risk of getting seriously ill from these diseases. Vaccines are safe and effective—they protect you and your loved ones. Adults most at risk for getting seriously ill from these diseases are older adults, people with disabilities and people who have compromised immune systems or health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease.

**What is the Cost?** Typically, vaccines are covered by insurance. Many vaccines are covered under Medicare. If you have questions, contact a health care professional or your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) to learn what vaccines are covered by Medicare.



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