



*Pneumonia
and influenza
shots are
quick, easy,
and relatively
painless. They
can keep you
from getting
seriously ill or
even dying.*

Does Medicare pay for your shots?

Yes. Medicare covers both
your flu and pneumonia
shots if coverage
requirements are met.

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Vaccination Facts

The Pneumonia and
Influenza Vaccines are very
important and can prevent
serious health problems.



FLU FACTS

What is influenza (flu)?

Influenza, more commonly known as the flu, is an infection caused by a virus. Signs of the flu include fever, cough, chills, sore throat, headache, and muscle ache.

How do you get the flu?

The flu is easily passed from person to person through the air by coughing and sneezing.

Why should you worry about the flu?

People of any age can get the flu, and most are only sick for a few days. However, the flu can be very serious for elderly people, leading to pneumonia, other health problems, and sometimes death.

A flu shot each year helps protect you from serious complications.

Who should get the flu shot?

Everyone 50 years of age and older should get a flu shot every year. Also, people of any age with health problems such as kidney disease, heart disease, or diabetes should receive the shot.

When should you get the flu shot?

If you are 50 or older, the best time to get the shot is in October, before the flu season begins. It starts to protect you about two weeks after the shot and may last up to a year.

Does the flu shot guarantee you will not get the flu?

While you may still get the flu, the shot helps protect you from serious complications and reduces the risk of serious problems and death.

Can the flu shot cause the flu?

No. Sometimes the flu shot can cause mild side effects (like soreness at the injection site, fever, tiredness, or aches) that will last only a few days.



PNEUMONIA FACTS

What is pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria. It can lead to serious infections of the lungs (pneumonia), the blood (bacteremia) and the covering of the brain (meningitis).

About one out of every 20 people who get pneumonia dies from it.

What is the pneumococcal shot?

This vaccine protects against 23 types of pneumococcal bacteria. A one-time shot usually gives you protection from pneumococcal disease. In some instances, you may need a second shot after five years—ask your doctor.

Who should get this shot?

Everyone 65 years of age or older should receive the pneumococcal shot. People who have long-term health problems such as kidney, heart, lung, liver, diabetes, or sickle cell disease should get this shot. Anyone who has a disease or condition that lowers the body's resistance to infection should also receive the injection.

When should you get your pneumococcal shot?

This shot can be received any time during the year. It usually begins protecting you within two or three weeks of getting the shot. You can get the pneumococcal shot at the same time you get your flu shot.