

Protect Yourself from Pneumococcal Disease



What is it?

Pneumococcal disease is a bacterial disease that can cause three serious infections:

- **meningitis** (brain infection)
- **bacteremia** (bloodstream infection)
- **pneumonia** (lung infection)

How is it spread?

The bacteria are spread from an infected person to another by close contact such as kissing, coughing and sneezing, or sharing items such as toys, musical instruments and cigarettes.

Who is at risk?

Every child under the age of 2, and

- children at higher risk of invasive disease
- children with an immunocompromising condition or chronic illness, such as:
 - sickle cell disease
 - immune deficiency (primary or secondary)
 - transplants
 - CSF leaks
 - chronic neurologic conditions causing difficulty with oral secretions
 - absent or poorly working spleen
 - nephrotic syndrome
 - chronic kidney, liver, or heart disease
 - asthma (age 2 to 17 years)
 - diabetes
 - HIV
- with cochlear implants
- on immunosuppressive therapy



Adults

- with a chronic illness such as:
 - heart disease • diabetes
 - HIV • asthma
- who are smokers
- who have smoking-related diseases such as COPD
- without a working spleen
- with weakened immune systems
- who are on immunosuppressive therapy
- 65 years of age and older
- who are experiencing homelessness
- who use illicit drugs
- with alcoholism
- living in long-term care facilities

Pneumococcal vaccine is safe and effective.

Talk to your family physician, pediatrician, nurse, pharmacist or public health office about being immunized.

For more information, visit immunize.ca

Reference: National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci.html>