

AGING WELL

A NEWSLETTER FROM



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Vaccination: Best way to prevent pneumococcal disease



What to know if your doctor recommends it for you

Most people know there are many infections – **caused by viruses** – that can be prevented through immunization. Some examples include vaccines to combat seasonal flu, shingles, polio, measles and many others. But some vaccines prevent diseases **caused by bacteria**, and one of these is the vaccine that prevents pneumococcal disease.

As you've probably guessed, the "pneum" in pneumococcal signals an infection of the lungs (pneumonia). But once inside the body, these bacteria can also cause infections of the middle ear or sinuses. And if the infection becomes invasive, it can result in potentially life-threatening:

- Blood poisoning (bacteremia)
- Infection of the tissues surrounding the brain and spinal cord (bacterial meningitis), and
- Infection inside the chambers of the heart or heart valves (endocarditis).

Got your FLU shot?



**We've got
you covered!**



65 or older? Your doctor might recommend vaccination. Why?

If we're in this age group, we're already at higher risk for pneumococcal disease (as are children under age 5). But we're at even higher risk for infection if we:

- Have a chronic illness such as diabetes, COPD, emphysema, heart disease, alcoholism or liver disease
- Have a condition that weakens our immune system
- Smoke cigarettes, or
- Live in a seniors residence.

You might wonder: Couldn't antibiotics be used for an infection instead of getting the vaccine?

Unfortunately, we live in times where bacteria – like pneumococcal bacteria – are becoming harder to treat because of “antibiotic resistance.” This means the best and safest strategy is disease prevention.

Please feel free to speak to our pharmacists if you have any questions. We're always here for you.



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