

Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (Pneu-C-13)

Public Health - Factsheet

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other medical intervention¹. Vaccines help your immunization system to recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause disease.

What is Pneumococcal Disease?

Pneumococcal infection is caused by bacteria that can spread easily from one person to another. The bacteria normally live in fluids in the nose, mouth and throat. It is spread by coughing, sneezing, or by sharing food or drinks. Most people who carry the bacteria do not get sick, but they can still spread it to other people.

Pneumococcal infection can result in serious and sometimes fatal diseases, including infections of the lungs (pneumonia), blood (bacteremia) and covering of the brain (meningitis). Meningitis can lead to permanent problems like deafness and brain damage. The incubation period can be as short as 1 to 3 days.

Babies and young children under the age of five are at higher risk of becoming sick. Children may become infected by sharing soothers, bottles or toys that have been in the mouths of other children.

What is the Pneu-C-13 vaccine?

Pneu-C-13 vaccine has been approved by Health Canada and provides protection against 13 types of pneumococcal strains that cause the most severe infections of the more than 90 types that circulate. This vaccine gets administered by needle.

In order to be fully protected against pneumococcal infections multiple doses may be required over a period of time; it is important to follow Manitoba's Immunization Schedule.

Why should I get the Pneu-C-13 vaccine?

Immunization is the best way to protect you or your child(ren) against pneumococcal infection that can often be serious and sometimes fatal.

Vaccines help prepare your body to fight potential future exposure to the bacteria by getting your immune system ready.

The vaccine helps to protect you, your family, and other people in your community.

Possible side-effects of the Pneu-C-13 vaccine

It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get the pneumococcal infection and its potential complications. Health Canada approves vaccines based on a review of quality and safety.

Common reactions to the vaccine include pain, soreness, redness and swelling where the vaccine was given. Other symptoms are fever, irritability, decreased appetite, and tiredness. These are mild reactions and usually last one to two days. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) can be given for fever or soreness.

ASA (Aspirin®) should NEVER be given to children because it can cause a severe liver and brain disease called Reye's Syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is a rare possibility of a severe allergic reaction. This can include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department for immediate attention should any reaction occur after leaving the clinic.

Report any serious or unexpected side effects to a health care provider.

Who should get the Pneu-C-13 vaccine?

All infants and children up to 59 months of age should get all required doses of Pneu-C-13 vaccine as part of Manitoba's routine childhood immunization schedule. It is especially important for children to get immunized with Pneu-C-13 if they are of Aboriginal ancestry or, have one or more of the following:

- Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leak

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada

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- No spleen, or a spleen that is not working properly
- Sickle cell disease
- An immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment (including long-term, high-dose steroid therapy)
- Kidney, heart, liver or lung disease
- Diabetes
- A solid organ, or stem cell transplant
- A cochlear implant or waiting for one
- HIV
- Chronic neurological condition that impairs clearance of oral secretions
- Cancers including leukemia or lymphoma

Some individuals have health conditions that put them at increased risk of getting sick with pneumococcal infection. Those who are ≥ 60 months of age should get the Pneu-C-13 vaccine if:

- they are solid organ transplant recipients
- they have human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- they had hematopoietic stem cell transplants (HSCT)

Those over two years of age with high risk medical conditions may need another kind of pneumococcal vaccine. It is called Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (Pneu-P-23). For more information, please see the **Pneu-P-23 Vaccine Factsheet**.

Talk to your immunization provider to see if you or your child(ren) are eligible to receive the Pneu-C-13 vaccine free-of-charge as part of Manitoba's immunization program.

Who should NOT get the Pneu-C-13 vaccine?

Talk with your health care provider if:

- you or your child(ren) have had a severe allergic reaction after receiving a previous dose of this vaccine or any contents of the vaccine and its container.

Anyone who has a high fever should not be immunized. But the vaccine can still be given if the illness is mild, like a cold.

Your record of protection

Make sure your immunization provider updates your immunization record card or that of your child(ren), after you receive an immunization. Keep the card in a safe place! Your immunizations or those of your child(ren) will be recorded in Manitoba's immunization registry. This registry:

- allows the health care provider to find out which immunizations you or your child(ren) have had or need to have;
- may be used to produce immunization records, or notify you or your health care provider if a particular immunization has been missed;
- allows Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living and public health officials to monitor how well vaccines work in preventing disease.

If you need information on the immunizations that you or your child(ren) have received, contact your health care provider.

The *Personal Health Information Act* protects your information and/or that of your child(ren). You can have your personal health information and/or that of your child(ren) hidden from view from health care providers. For additional information, please contact your local public health office to speak with a public health nurse.

For a listing of public health offices please visit: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/offices.html>.

For more information on the Pneu-C-13 vaccine:

- Talk to your doctor, public health nurse or pharmacist.
- Call Health Links — Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204-788-8200; toll-free elsewhere in Manitoba 1-888-315-9257.

- Or visit:

Manitoba's Immunization Program website
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/div/index.html>

Government of Canada website
<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/immunization-immunisation/index-eng.php>

Canadian Pediatric Society website
www.cps.ca/