

# 3 Important Reasons For Adults to Get Vaccinated

You may not realize you need vaccines throughout your adult life. Vaccines are important to your health and here are three reasons why.



## 1. You may be at risk for serious diseases that are still common in the U.S.

Each year thousands of adults in the United States get sick from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines — some people are hospitalized, and some even die.

Even if you got all your vaccines as a child, the protection from some vaccines can wear off over time. You may also be at risk for other diseases due to your age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health conditions.

## 2. You can't afford to risk getting sick.

Even healthy people can get sick enough to miss work or school. If you're sick, you may not be able to take care of your family or other responsibilities.

## 3. You can protect your health and the health of those around you by getting the recommended vaccines.

**Vaccines lower your chance of getting sick.** Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses to lower the chances of getting certain diseases as well as suffering complications from these diseases.

**Vaccines lower your chance of spreading certain diseases.** There are many things you want to pass on to your loved ones; a vaccine preventable disease is not one of them. Infants, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems (like those undergoing cancer treatment) are especially vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases.

**Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health.** Vaccine side effects are usually mild and go away on their own. Severe side effects are very rare.

## What vaccines do you need?

### All adults should get:

- Flu vaccine every year to protect against seasonal flu
- Td/Tdap to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough)

**Based on your age, health conditions, vaccines you received as a child, and other factors, you may need additional vaccines such as:**

- Chickenpox
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- MMR
- Meningococcal
- Pneumococcal
- Shingles

## Getting Vaccinated

Adults can get vaccines at doctors' offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, and other locations. To find a vaccine provider near you, go to <http://vaccine.healthmap.org>.

Most health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. Check with your insurance provider for details and for a list of vaccine providers. If you do not have health insurance, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) to learn more about health coverage options.

**DON'T WAIT.  
VACCINATE!**



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Diseases and the vaccines that help prevent them	How the disease can affect you
<b>Influenza “Flu”</b> Seasonal flu vaccine	Fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, headache, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, muscle or body aches, and fatigue (very tired), and some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Pneumonia (infection in the lungs), worsening of chronic health conditions, hospitalization, possibly resulting in disability, or even death
<b>Hepatitis A</b> Hep A vaccine	Fever, tiredness, stomach pain, loss of appetite, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes), and dark urine; however, there may be no symptoms. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Liver failure; arthralgia (joint pain); and kidney, pancreatic, and blood disorders
<b>Hepatitis B</b> Hep B vaccine	Flu-like illness with loss of appetite, fever, tiredness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, jaundice, and joint pain; however, there may be no symptoms. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Chronic liver infection, liver failure, and liver cancer
<b>Human Papillomavirus (HPV)</b> HPV vaccine	Frequently, there are no symptoms for years until cancer appears. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Cervical cancer in women, anal cancer, and genital warts in both women and men
<b>Measles</b> MMR	Fever, runny nose, cough and a rash all over the body. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Ear infection, pneumonia, swelling in the brain due to infection, or even death
<b>Meningococcal Disease</b> Meningococcal vaccine	Nausea, vomiting, stiff neck, fever, headache, increased sensitivity to light, confusion, tiredness, and rash. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Brain damage, loss of arms or legs, loss of hearing, seizures, strokes, or even death
<b>Pneumococcal Disease</b> Pneumococcal vaccine	Fever, chills, difficulty breathing, chest pain, stiff neck, earache, increased sensitivity to light, and cough. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Infections of the lung, middle ear, or sinuses, heart problems, brain damage, loss of hearing, loss of arms or legs, or even death
<b>Shingles</b> Zoster vaccine	Painful rash on one side of the face or body, which blisters and then typically scabs, headache, fever, chills, and upset stomach. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Severe pain that can last for months or years after the rash goes away, pneumonia, loss of eyesight and hearing, or even death
<b>Tetanus</b> Td/Tdap vaccine	Serious, painful spasms and stiffness of all muscles, lockjaw (difficulty opening mouth), difficulty swallowing or breathing, muscle spasms, and fever. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Broken bones, breathing difficulty, or even death
<b>Whooping Cough (Pertussis)</b> Tdap vaccine	Prolonged cold symptoms (cough and runny nose) leading to violent coughing or choking making it hard to breathe, drink, or eat. <b>Disease Complications:</b> Rib fractures, pneumonia, or even death

For a full list of all diseases that can be prevented by vaccines, visit: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac)

**Traveling overseas? There may be additional vaccines you need.**  
Find out at: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

Talk with your healthcare professional to make sure you are up to date with the vaccines recommended for you.

For more information on vaccines or to take an adult vaccine quiz to find out which vaccines you might need, visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults).

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention