

# Pneumococcal Conjugate 15 (PNEU-C15) Vaccine

## Get protected, get immunized.

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger. They build antibodies to help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get these diseases.

## What is the PNEU-C15 vaccine?

The PNEU-C15 vaccine protects against 15 strains (types) of the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that cause pneumococcal disease.

## What is pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria.

It can lead to lung, airway, blood, and middle-ear infections and meningitis (an infection of the fluid and lining that cover the brain and spinal cord).

Pneumococcal disease is a common cause of bacterial blood infections and meningitis in young children, and bacterial pneumonia (a type of lung infection) in adults.

It causes 700,000 deaths worldwide each year in children under age 5 years.

When adults with pneumococcal disease have an infection in their lungs and blood, as many as 1 in 14 could die. The risk of dying may be higher as you get older.

## Who is most at risk?

You are most at risk of having a serious infection if:

- You are very young or very old.
- You have certain chronic health problems.
- You live in a care facility, like a continuing care home.
- You smoke or vape.
- You have an alcohol or substance use problem.
- You experience homelessness.

## How does it spread?

Pneumococcal disease spreads through droplets of saliva (spit) and mucus when coughing, sneezing, kissing, and sharing things such as food or toys.

Even if you do not have symptoms, you can still spread the disease.

## Who should get the PNEU-C15 vaccine?

As part of the routine immunization schedule, children get this vaccine starting at age 2 months up to and including age 4 years. You do not get this vaccine if you are age 5 years or older.

## How many doses do I need?

Most children need 3 doses, which are given at ages 2, 4, and 12 months. If your child has not had all of their pneumococcal vaccine doses as part of their routine immunizations, the PNEU-C15 vaccine can be used to complete their series.

Your child may get fewer doses depending on their age when they start this vaccine. It is not recommended to delay this immunization because babies have a higher risk of pneumococcal disease. Ask your healthcare provider how many doses your child needs.

## Are there other vaccines that protect against pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal conjugate 20 vaccine (PNEU-C20) may be recommended for people who are at a higher risk for serious pneumococcal disease. This includes people who:

- have heart, lung, kidney, or liver problems
- have diabetes
- have a weak immune system
- are age 65 years or older
- are Indigenous
- live in a care facility, like a continuing care home
- experience homelessness
- smoke or vape
- live in a home with poor indoor air quality, like if you use a wood-burning stove or live with someone who smokes inside the home
- have an alcohol or substance use problem

Ask your healthcare provider what pneumococcal vaccine you should have.

See reverse for more information.

## How well does the vaccine work?

The PNEU-C15 vaccine protects against 15 different types of the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that cause pneumococcal disease. How well the vaccine works is different for each type of bacteria. Compared to the other pneumococcal conjugate vaccines that protect against fewer types of bacteria, the PNEU-C15 vaccine may provide better protection against certain types of bacteria that are currently spreading.

Immunization is the best way to protect your child from getting pneumococcal disease.

## Where can I get the PNEU-C15 vaccine?

If you can get this vaccine for free, you can get it at your local public health or community health centre.

If you want the vaccine and need to pay for it, contact a private immunization clinic or talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

## Are there side effects from the PNEU-C15 vaccine?

There can be side effects from the PNEU-C15 vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- redness, swelling, itching, a hard spot, or feeling sore where you had the needle
- feeling tired or getting upset easily
- sleeping more than usual
- headache
- fever
- body aches or sore joints
- not feeling hungry or not wanting to eat (poor appetite)
- rash

At least 1 out of 100 people who got this vaccine reported 1 or more of these side effects. In some cases, it is unknown if the vaccine caused these side effects.

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

## How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with fever or pain. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what medicine or dose to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weak immune system, must call their doctor if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

## Who should not get the PNEU-C15 vaccine?

You may not be able to get this vaccine if:

- You have an allergy to any part of the vaccine.
- You had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it.

If you have allergies or have had a side effect from this vaccine, check with your doctor or a public health nurse before you get the vaccine.

Although, you can get the vaccine if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever, you should stay home until you are feeling better to prevent spreading your illness to others.

## I have a fear of needles. How can I prepare for my immunization?

Many adults and children are afraid of needles. You can do many things before, during, and after immunization to be more comfortable.



Scan the QR code, visit [ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort](https://ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort), or call Health Link at **811** for information.

## For more information about immunization



Call Health Link at **811**



Scan the QR code or go to [ahs.ca/immunize](https://ahs.ca/immunize)