

# Important Information about LUNG DISEASE and Pneumococcal Disease

Talk to Your Patients about Protecting Themselves from this Dangerous Infection



Saving Lives:  
Integrating  
Vaccines for  
Adults Into  
Routine Care

- Patients with lung disease are at an increased risk for complications from pneumococcal disease.
  - For patients with COPD, both the condition and its treatment (e.g., corticosteroids) are contributing factors. These patients generally develop chronic colonization of the lower respiratory tract with bacteria, including *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, the pathogen that causes pneumococcal disease.
  - For patients with asthma, factors related to this risk may include:
    - The correlation between respiratory infections and asthma exacerbations
    - The disrupted barrier of the airway lining, increased mucous production, and alterations in immune responses in people with asthma
    - Use of asthma medications (e.g., oral corticosteroids) that may suppress the immune system.
- Pneumococcal disease causes serious illnesses like pneumonia, meningitis, and sepsis.
- Pneumococcal disease is serious and deadly. In the US, pneumococcal pneumonia, meningitis, and sepsis kill tens of thousands each year.
- Pneumococcal disease survivors may suffer hearing loss, seizures, blindness, or paralysis.
- Pneumococcal vaccination is recommended for all adults with lung disease.

## Adults with LUNG DISEASE Are Among Those Who Need Pneumococcal Vaccination

There are two types of pneumococcal vaccine recommended for US adults: a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) and a pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23).

Adults 65 and older, and adults age 19 to 64 years with any of the following need to receive both vaccines: immunocompromising conditions or treatments (e.g., HIV/AIDS, leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin disease, radiation therapy); a damaged or missing spleen; cochlear implants; or cerebrospinal fluid leaks.

Other adults for whom pneumococcal vaccination is recommended only need PPSV23, but may need more than one dose and will need PCV13 when they, too, reach age 65. Please refer to the [Adult Pneumococcal Vaccination Guide](#) or visit [cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/](http://cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/) for details on timing of vaccine doses.

*For more information and resources to educate patients about pneumococcal disease, visit [adultvaccination.org/professional-resources/pneumo](http://adultvaccination.org/professional-resources/pneumo)*



This initiative is supported by unrestricted educational grants from Merck & Co., Inc. and Pfizer Inc. NFID policies restrict funders from controlling program content.

October 2014