

# Pneumococcal Conjugate 20 Vaccine

Vaccines have saved more lives compared to any other medical intervention. Vaccines help the immune system recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause serious diseases.

## Some pneumococcal diseases are vaccine preventable.

- **Pneumococcal diseases** are caused by different types of *Streptococci pneumoniae* ('strep') bacteria and cause many deaths worldwide.
- Pneumococcal diseases are most common in young children, the elderly and persons who have certain underlying medical conditions or lifestyles.
- These bacteria can cause ear and sinus infections, bronchitis, serious and life-threatening infections of the lungs (pneumonia), blood (bacteremia) and the lining that covers the brain (meningitis) or death may occur.
- Permanent complications include brain damage and deafness.

## How are pneumococcal bacteria spread?

- Pneumococcal bacteria are spread directly from one person to another through coughing, sneezing, in saliva when kissing, through sharing drinks, or close face-to-face contact.
- Babies and children can become sick by using soothers, bottles or toys that are used by other children.
- People can pick up the bacteria if they touch surfaces that have the bacteria on them.
- Many people carry pneumococcal bacteria in their nose and throat but do not become sick.
- Children who attend childcare centres. are **2 to 3 times** more likely to develop pneumococcal disease and ear infections than children who don't attend childcare centres.

## How can pneumococcal disease be prevented?

- Be immunized. When you and your child are immunized, you help protect others as well.
- Practice good hygiene (e.g., handwashing).
- Cover your mouth when coughing and your nose and mouth when sneezing to prevent direct contact with droplets from the nose or throat.

## Important to know:

- This vaccine provides protection against 20 common pneumococcal bacterial strains. It does not protect against other pneumococcal bacterial strains.

## Who may get this vaccine for free?

- Adults 65 years and older **who have never received any previous pneumococcal vaccines.**
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT) recipients
- Islet cell transplant candidates or recipients
- Solid organ transplant candidates or recipients
- Individuals 2 months through 64 years of age and select adults 65 years and older who have **risk factors for pneumococcal disease such as:**
  - Long-term care, personal care home and group home residents (all ages)
  - Asplenia (congenital, acquired, or functional)
  - Cardiac (heart) disease
  - Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) disorders
  - Cochlear implant candidate or recipient
  - Cystic fibrosis
  - Diabetes mellitus
  - Liver disease (e.g., cirrhosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C) and alcoholism
  - Pulmonary (lung) disease (excluding asthma, unless on high doses of oral corticosteroids)
  - Malignancies/cancer (must have current diagnosis, and not in remission)
  - Neurological conditions that impede the clearance of respiratory/oral secretions
  - Renal (kidney) disease
  - Sickle cell disease and other hemoglobinopathies
  - Acquired complement deficiency
  - Congenital immunodeficiency
  - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
  - Immunosuppression related to disease or treatment
  - Homelessness
  - Substance (drug) use including injectable steroids (excludes marijuana)

**NOTE: Eligibility for these risk factors is based on age, risk factor, pneumococcal immunization history and interval from last pneumococcal vaccine dose.**

## Who should not get this vaccine?

- Persons who have a serious acute illness, with or without a fever should delay immunizations.
- People who had a serious or life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of any pneumococcal vaccine, or any components of this vaccine.

## What are common reactions to this vaccine?

- **Vaccines are very safe and effective. It is much safer to get this vaccine than to get pneumococcal disease.**
- Pain, swelling, redness, tenderness, itching or rash at injection site, lymph node swelling.
- Fever, irritability, tiredness, headache, muscle aches, joint pain, decreased appetite, generalized rash.
- These mild reactions generally last 1 to 2 days.
- Only treat a fever (at least 6 to 8 hours after immunization) **if your/your child is uncomfortable, refusing fluids and not sleeping.**

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips.

This reaction can be treated and occurs in less than one in one million people who get the vaccine. **If this happens after you leave the clinic, get medical attention or call 911 right away.**

## Who should you report reactions to?

- Report any adverse or unexpected reactions to your local public health nurse, your doctor, nurse practitioner or call 811 as soon as possible.

## Talk to a public health nurse:

- If you have questions or concerns about you or your child's reaction to an immunization.
- If you or your child had to go to a doctor, a hospital or to a health centre with a symptom that might be related to immunization.

## What does this vaccine contain?

**PREVNAR 20™** contains 20 *Streptococcus pneumoniae* bacterial serotypes (1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 18C, 19A, 19F, 22F, 23F, and 33F) on a CRM<sub>197</sub> carrier protein, aluminum phosphate, polysorbate 80, sodium chloride, succinic acid and water for injection. Preservative-free. Latex-free.

## Mature Minor Consent

It is recommended that parents/guardians discuss consent for immunization with their children. Efforts are first made to get parental/guardian consent for immunizations. However, children at least 13 years of age up to and including 17 years of age, who are able to understand the benefits and possible reactions for each vaccine and the risks of not getting immunized, can legally consent to or refuse immunizations in Saskatchewan by providing mature minor informed consent to a healthcare provider.

Provincial immunization fact sheets are available at [www.saskatchewan.ca/immunize](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/immunize).

**For more information, contact your local public health office, your physician, nurse practitioner, HealthLine online or by calling 811.**

**References:** [Canadian Immunization Guide](#). PREVNAR 20™ product monograph (2023).

Use **Acetaminophen (all ages; Tylenol®, Tempra®)** or **Ibuprofen (6 months and older; Advil®, Motrin®)** to treat fevers and pain. **Never give ASA (Aspirin®)** to children younger than 18 years of age because of the serious risk of Reye's Syndrome.