

What You Need to Know About the Pneumonia Vaccine

ASK THE PHARMACIST BY NICHOLAS WATTS

My doctor suggested I get the pneumonia vaccine. Can you explain?

Vaccines work by building-up the body's defense system and lowering the chances of getting sick. After getting a vaccine, the body can recognize the germ that causes sickness and fight it off. The pneumonia vaccine protects the body from *S. pneumonia*. This germ can cause serious infection in the lungs (pneumonia), around the brain (meningitis) and the blood stream. It also causes infections in the ear and nose.

This germ is passed from person to person by touch or by breathing it through the air. Getting the vaccine is the best way to prevent infection. Also, covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze can reduce the spread of germs. Hand washing is important to prevent spreading disease. Your pharmacist can give you the vaccine with a prescription from your doctor.

Who should get this vaccine? Everyone over the age of 65 should get the pneumonia vaccine. If you had the vaccine before age 65 wait at least 5 years before getting it again.

Anyone who has a weak immune system should be vaccinated to prevent infection. This includes people who have had their spleen removed or an organ transplant, people with Sickle cell disease or HIV. People over the age of 19 who smoke or have alcoholism should get the vaccine.

Anyone between the age of 2 and 64 with high risk of infection should get the vaccine. This includes people who have heart disease, lung disease, liver disease, kidney disease or diabetes. People with certain cancers, such as leukemia, lymphoma and Hodgkin's disease should be vaccinated.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to see if you should be vaccinated.

Who should NOT get this vaccine? Anyone who has had the pneumonia vaccine before and had an allergic reaction should not get the vaccine. If you are sick or have a fever, you should wait until you are better to get the vaccine.

What are the side effects? The most common side effects are pain, swelling and redness where the vaccine was given. Headache and tiredness can also occur. These side effects usually go away within few days.

Will insurance cover the vaccine? The vaccine is covered by some insurance plans including Medicare part B plans. The pharmacy can tell you if the vaccine is covered and the cost through your insurance. All you need is a prescription from your doctor and your insurance card.

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Joint Adventure *continued from page 18*

The International Council on Active Aging® President and CEO Colin Milner says, "Throughout the years, Kisco has constantly achieved better ways to help residents age well in a wide variety of programs. This level of commitment to improving the lives of their residents has seen them gain industry recognition for their efforts. Pairing associates with residents is another step along this path, as personalization of programs and services is key to helping residents meet their goals. Kisco's approach is in line with what the market seeks."

Then, the program caused a somewhat unexpected outcome. "Don and I would share stories about him raising his daughters and me growing up with sisters. And all the while, I was nearing my goal. I completed the 5k without stopping! Still, my favorite part was the connection that I created with Don. The time we spent together was filled with laughter and support and all the things that buddies do."

Since Phase 1 of the *Spring into Action* program ended, most pairs continue their established health routines. Phase 2, scheduled to begin in January 2014, will

Who Needs a Pneumonia Vaccine?

Are You?

- Over the age of 65
- Between the age of 2 and 65

Do You Have?

- Heart disease or heart failure
- Lung disease, COPD, emphysema or asthma
- Liver disease or cirrhosis
- Alcoholism
- Kidney disease or kidney failure
- Diabetes
- Cochlear implants
- Cancer
- Leukemia
- Lymphoma
- Hodgkin Disease
- Sickle Cell disease
- HIV/AIDS
- A weak immune system

Have You Had?

- Your spleen removed
- An organ transplant
- Corticosteroids for more than two weeks
- Chemotherapy or Radiation therapy

Do You?

- Smoke cigarettes

If you checked one or more boxes you should talk to your doctor or pharmacist about getting the Pneumococcal Vaccine.

Ask the Orthopaedist by Dr. Matthew Boes

Q. *It's hot outside! How can I remain active and avoid heat-related illness?*

A. The dog days of summer are here! With proper planning, however, you can still tend the garden, play 18 holes of golf or go for a brisk walk without falling prey to the heat.

There are 3 types of heat illness:

- **Heat cramps** (mild illness) – Painful cramps in the stomach, arm, and leg muscles.
- **Heat exhaustion** (moderate illness) – Brought on by heavy sweating, and as illness progresses, sweating decreases and skin and body temperatures rise. Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, nausea and vomiting.
- **Heat stroke** (severe illness) – Occurs when the body cannot cool itself and core body temperature exceeds 104 degrees. Symptoms include nausea, seizures, confusion/disorientation and potentially unconsciousness and coma.

Follow these recommendations to avoid heat illness and remain active outdoors:

- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! Drink 24 ounces of water 2 hours before activity, and drink an additional 8 ounces of water or sports drink just before activity. During exercise or activity, drink 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes.
- Gradually increase your outdoor activity in the heat over a week to help you acclimate to the temperature.
- Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing when outside.
- Wear sunscreen and reapply often.
- Schedule outdoor exercise at the coolest time of day, (early morning or after sunset).

Matthew Boes, MD, is a board-certified, fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine and shoulder and knee replacement. A member of Raleigh Orthopaedic Clinic, he serves as Team Physician for North Carolina State University's football and baseball teams. For info, call (919) 863-6808 or visit www.matthewboesmd.com

Do you have an orthopaedic question for Dr. Boes? Send your inquiries to barbara@boomnc.com



pair those from Phase 1 who reached their goals. Other associates and residents are welcome to participate.

"The program transformed people into aides and even cheerleaders. We created a fitness program formula that is extremely effective and we are excited to expand it to our other communities," says Connelly.

To learn more about Spring into Action, contact Kisco Senior Living Wellness Team Leader Maria Connelly at 760.804.7031 or email her at Maria.connelly@kiscosl.com.

Connie Miller is the Wellness Director at Abbotswood at Stonehenge, a Kisco Senior Living community.