

# What You Need to Know About Diabetes and Adult Vaccines

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. People with diabetes (both type 1 and type 2) are at higher risk for serious problems from certain vaccine-preventable diseases.

**Getting vaccinated is an important step in staying healthy.**



## Why Vaccines Are Important for You

Diabetes, even if well managed, can make it harder for your immune system to fight infections. If you have diabetes, you may be at risk for more serious complications from an illness compared to people without diabetes.

- Some illnesses, like influenza, can raise your blood glucose to dangerously high levels. When you are sick, you need to monitor your blood sugar more often.
- People with diabetes have higher rates of hepatitis B than the rest of the population. Outbreaks of hepatitis B associated with blood glucose monitoring procedures (blood sugar meters, finger stick devices, and other equipment such as insulin pens) have happened among people with diabetes.
- People with diabetes are at increased risk for death from pneumonia (lung infection), bacteremia (blood infection), and meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord).

Immunization provides the best protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Vaccines are one of the safest ways for you to protect your health, even if you are taking prescription medications to control your diabetes.

Vaccine side effects are usually mild and go away on their own. Severe side effects are very rare.

## Getting Vaccinated

You regularly see your provider for diabetes care, and that is a great place to start! If your healthcare professional does not offer the vaccines you need, ask for a referral so you can get the vaccines elsewhere.

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

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

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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## What vaccines do you need?

**Flu vaccine** every year to protect against seasonal flu

**Pneumococcal vaccines** to protect against serious pneumococcal diseases

**Hepatitis B vaccine series** to protect against hepatitis B

**Tdap vaccine** to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough)

**Zoster vaccine** to protect against shingles if you are 50 years or older

There may be other vaccines recommended for you so be sure to talk with your healthcare professional about what is right for you.

# DON'T WAIT. VACCINATE!



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
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