

# IMMUNIZATIONS

## GET VACCINATED TO STAY HEALTHY

**Immunizations are not just for kids. Regardless of our age, we need to protect ourselves and our loved ones from serious illness and disease. Young adults, middle-aged adults and senior citizens all need immunizations to stay healthy.**



### WHAT IMMUNIZATIONS DO I NEED?

The specific immunizations you need as an adult are determined by factors such as your age, lifestyle, high-risk conditions, type and locations of travel, and previous immunizations. Throughout your adult life, you need immunizations to protect against:

**Seasonal influenza (flu)** – a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Some people, particularly older adults, young children and those with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.

**Tetanus (lockjaw)** – a serious disease that causes painful tightening of the muscles, usually all over the body. It can lead to “locking” of the jaw, which prevents the mouth from opening and interferes with swallowing.

**Diphtheria** – a respiratory disease that causes a thick covering in the back of the throat. It can lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure and even death.

**Pertussis (whooping cough)** – a highly contagious respiratory tract infection. Although it initially resembles an ordinary cold, whooping cough may eventually become more serious.

**Shingles** – a painful localized skin rash often appearing with blisters that is caused by the varicella zoster virus (VZV), the same virus that causes chickenpox. Anyone who has had chickenpox can develop shingles, because the VZV remains in the nerve cells of the body after the chickenpox infection clears. VZV can reappear years later and cause shingles.

**Pneumococcal disease** – an infection caused by a type of bacteria called *Streptococcus pneumonia* (pneumococcus). There are many different types of pneumococcal disease, such as pneumococcal pneumonia, bacteremia, meningitis and otitis media.

**Human papillomavirus (HPV)** - the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI). There are more than 40 HPV types that can infect males and females. These HPV types can also infect the mouth and throat. Most people who become infected with HPV do not even know they have it. These are viruses that can be passed during sex, but they cause different symptoms and health problems.

Other vaccinations you may need include those that protect against hepatitis A, hepatitis B, chickenpox (varicella), and measles, mumps and rubella.

## ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE

IMMUNIZATIONS	SCHEDULE
<b>Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough)</b>	One-time Tdap. Td booster every 10 years for all adults.
<b>Measles/mumps/rubella (MMR)</b>	One to two doses as recommended by your doctor.
<b>Pneumococcal</b>	High-risk individuals are at age 65. One to two doses as recommended by your doctor.
<b>Influenza</b>	Annually.
<b>Chickenpox (varicella)</b>	One series of two doses at least one month apart for adults with no history of chickenpox.
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	One 2-dose series. Based on individual risk or physician recommendation.
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	One or two doses per lifetime. Based on individual risk or physician recommendation.
<b>Human papillomavirus (HPV)</b>	For individuals age 9-26, one 3-dose series. Dose 2 at two months after dose 1. Dose 3 at six months after dose 1.
<b>Shingles (zoster)</b>	One dose at age 60 or older.

If you have any questions regarding your immunizations, contact your doctor. Your doctor is always your best resource for your health care questions or concerns.

- Call a Blues On Call<sup>SM</sup> Health Coach at **1.888.BLUE.428** to find out more about immunizations.
- Log on to your member website for more resources.