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## Pneumonia Vaccine Information

**Q:** *What is the "pneumonia vaccine" and do I need it?*

**A:** The pneumococcal vaccine, also known as 23-valent polysaccharide vaccine, is a recommended vaccination to prevent pneumococcal disease. *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (pneumococcus) is a common bacteria and is the most common cause of community-acquired bacterial pneumonia. Pneumococcal disease results in over 175,000 hospitalizations annually in the United States and over 6,000 deaths annually according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### **Vaccination Recommendation**

This once-in-a-lifetime pneumococcal vaccination is recommended for the following individuals:

- Adults age 65 years or older -
  - A second vaccination at age 65 is **only indicated** if a prior pneumococcal vaccination occurred during ages 19-64 and it has been more than 5 years since that vaccination,
- Residents of long term care facilities,
- Individuals with weak immune systems due to cancer, leukemia, Hodgkin's disease or HIV,
- Individuals with chronic illness such as lung, heart, kidney disease and diabetes.

For additional information see your physician or go to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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Adapted from *Pneumococcal Vaccination*, U.S. Centers for Disease Control  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/default.htm> - Sept. 2010