

Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine

Vaccination,
the best protection

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Vaccination is the best protection against serious pneumococcal infections and their complications. Bacteremia (blood infection) with or without pneumonia and meningitis (infection of the brain lining) are 2 serious infections caused by pneumococcus. There are several types of pneumococcus. The polysaccharide vaccine provides protection against the 23 most frequent types.

Disease	Signs and symptoms	Possible complications
Pneumococcal infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear infection • Sinusitis • Pneumonia • Meningitis (infection of the brain lining) • Bacteremia (blood infection) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deafness (becoming deaf) • Permanent brain damage • Death

The vaccine

Vaccination is the best protection against serious pneumococcal infections and their complications. Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine is recommended for people aged 65 and older. It is also indicated for persons ages 2 to 64 who have a high risk of serious pneumococcal infection.

Persons with a high risk of serious pneumococcal infection include those with no spleen or a malfunctioning spleen (through surgery or after certain diseases), those who have cochlear implant surgery, those who suffer from certain chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer or heart, respiratory, or kidney disease, and those whose immune system has been weakened.

Symptoms after vaccination

Some symptoms may be caused by the vaccine (e.g. redness at the injection site). Other problems may occur by chance and are not related to the vaccine (e.g. cold, gastro, headache).

Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine is safe. Most reactions are harmless and do not last long.

Frequency	Possible reactions to the vaccine	What to do
In most cases (more than 50% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain, redness and swelling at the injection site for under 48 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a cold, damp compress at the injection site. • Use a medication for fever or discomfort if needed. • See a doctor if symptoms are severe.
Often (less than 10% of people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate or high fever, muscle soreness, headache 	
Very rarely (less than 1 person in 10,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, high fever, discomfort, swollen lymph nodes, joint pain, skin rash 	

We recommend that you stay at the clinic for at least 15 minutes after vaccination because allergic reactions may occur. If an allergic reaction occurs, the symptoms will appear a few minutes after the vaccination. The person giving the vaccine will be able to treat this reaction immediately.

For any questions, contact the person giving the vaccine, or Info-Santé 8-1-1 or your doctor.