

Immunizing Adult Patients: Standards for Practice

Your patients trust you to give them the best advice on how to protect their health. Vaccine-preventable diseases can result in serious illness, hospitalization, and even death.

Make adult vaccination a standard of care in your practice.

Your patients have probably not received all the vaccines they need.

Even though most insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines, adult vaccination rates in the U.S. are extremely low. Each year, tens of thousands of adults needlessly suffer, are hospitalized, and even die as a result of diseases that could be prevented by vaccines.

Your patients may not even realize that they need vaccines.

Many adults don't know which vaccines are recommended for them throughout their lives. Many also report not receiving vaccine recommendations from their healthcare professional.

You can make a difference.

Clinicians are the most valued and trusted source of health information for adults. Research shows that most adults believe vaccines are important and that a recommendation from their healthcare professional is a key predictor of patients getting needed vaccines.

Make Immunization a Standard of Patient Care In Your Practice:

1. **ASSESS** the immunization status of all your patients at every clinical encounter.
 - Stay informed about the latest CDC recommendations for immunization of adults.
 - Implement protocols in your office to ensure that patients' vaccine needs are routinely reviewed and patients get reminders about vaccines they need.
2. Strongly **RECOMMEND** vaccines that your patients need.
 - Address patient questions and concerns in clear and understandable language.
 - Highlight your positive experiences with vaccination (personal or in your practice).
3. **ADMINISTER** needed vaccines or **REFER** your patients to a vaccination provider.
 - For vaccines that you stock, make vaccination services as convenient as possible for your patients.
 - For vaccines that you don't stock, refer patients to providers in the area that offer vaccination services.
4. **DOCUMENT** vaccines received by your patients.
 - Participate in your state's immunization registry to help your office, your patients, and your patients' other providers know which vaccines your patients have had.
 - Follow up to confirm that patients received recommended vaccines that you referred them to get from other immunization providers.

Standards for Adult Immunization Practice emphasize the role of ALL healthcare professionals—whether they provide immunization services or not—in ensuring that adult patients are fully immunized. These standards are published by the National Vaccine Advisory Committee and supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as a number of national medical associations.

**DON'T WAIT.
VACCINATE!**



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Overview of Recommended Vaccines for Adults*

VACCINE	WHO NEEDS IT	NUMBER OF DOSES
Seasonal Influenza	ALL Adults	1 dose every year
Tdap	ALL Adults who have not received a dose since age 11 or older Women should receive during every pregnancy	1 dose (All) 1 dose each pregnancy
Td	ALL Adults	1 dose every 10 years
Zoster	Adults 60 years or older	1 dose
Pneumococcal Conjugate	Adult 65 years or older Adults 64 or younger with certain medical conditions (HIV, asplenia, sickle cell disease, cerebrospinal fluid leaks, cochlear implants, or conditions that cause weakening of the immune system)	1 dose (if not previously received) 1 dose (if not previously received)
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide	Adults 65 years or older Adults 64 years or younger with certain medical conditions and who are at higher risk of infection	1 dose 1 or 2 doses
HPV	Adults 26 years or younger who have not started or finished the vaccine series	3 doses
Meningococcal	Adults who have not had the vaccine and are at risk for exposure or have damaged spleen	1 or more doses
MMR	Adults born during or after 1957 who have not had the vaccine or do not have documented evidence of immunity	1 or 2 doses
Varicella	Adults who have not had chickenpox or do not have documented evidence of immunity	2 doses
Hep A	Adults who are at risk and have not had the vaccine series	2 doses
Hep B	Adults who have not had the vaccine series and who are at risk, including adults with diabetes, end-stage kidney disease, chronic liver disease, or behaviors that increase risk	3 doses
Hib	Adults with special health conditions (sickle cell disease, HIV/AIDS, removal of the spleen, bone marrow transplant, or cancer treatment with drugs) who have not already had the vaccine	1 dose

*Visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/ for a detailed schedule of recommended vaccines and guidelines for administration.

Coverage of Adult Vaccines

Most private health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. If your patients do not currently have health insurance, refer them to www.HealthCare.gov to learn more about health coverage options.

For patients 65 years or older enrolled in Medicare, Medicare Part B covers the cost of influenza and pneumococcal vaccines as well as Hep B vaccine for persons at increased risk of hepatitis. Those with a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan (Part D) or enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan (Part C) that offers Medicare prescription drug coverage may also have coverage for additional vaccines like zoster, MMR, and Tdap. Visit www.Medicare.gov for more information.

Vaccine coverage for Medicaid beneficiaries varies by state. Contact your State Medicaid Agency for more information.

In 2014:

- Only 20% of adults 19 years or older had received Tdap vaccine.
- Only 28% of adults 60 years or older had received zoster vaccine.
- Only 20% of adults 19 to 64 years at high risk had received pneumococcal vaccine.

Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2014.

For additional information on adult immunization and resources for patient education, visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults.