

# Gather Info to Guide Pneumococcal Vaccine Choices

**Ongoing changes to the pneumococcal vaccine recommendations for adults are making heads spin.**

Last year, CDC recommended *Prevnar 20* alone OR *Vaxneuvance* plus *Pneumovax 23* for adults 65 and up...or 19 to 64 with risk factors (diabetes, etc)...who've never had a pneumococcal vaccine.

Now CDC's updated immunization schedule clarifies options for those adults with prior pneumococcal vaccination (*Prevnar 13*, etc).

But it's A LOT for anyone to keep straight.

Use these tips to help your pharmacist determine which pneumococcal vaccine adults need...and when.

Become familiar with CDC's *PneumoRecs VaxAdvisor* website or app. It customizes pneumococcal vaccine recommendations based on patient-specific information.

Gather the details needed to use this tool. Verify patient age...medical conditions...and smoking status.

Also get a pneumococcal vaccine history...such as by reviewing your state's immunization registry or asking the patient. Note dates of administration and other details in the patient profile.

Pay close attention to pneumococcal vaccine abbreviations during this process. It's easy to confuse PCV13 (*Prevnar 13*)...PCV15 (*Vaxneuvance*)...PCV20 (*Prevnar 20*)...and PPSV23 (*Pneumovax 23*).

Pull in your pharmacist to review the info you've collected...and to discuss the recommendations with the patient.

Be ready to dispense *Prevnar 20* for most adults who need to complete the pneumococcal vaccine series.

For example, it's a recommended option for patients 65 or older and immunocompromised patients 19 to 64...who've only had *Prevnar 13* or who've only had *Pneumovax 23*.

But if adults over 65 already completed the series with both *Prevnar 13* AND *Pneumovax 23*, the benefit of adding *Prevnar 20* is small. Pharmacists and patients should work together to decide whether it's worth it.

If these seniors want *Prevnar 20*, check that it's been at least 5 years since their last pneumococcal vaccine dose.

Brush up on billing and storage with our resource, *The Basics of Immunization and Vaccines*...and compare products with our resource, *Comparison of Pneumococcal Vaccines*.

## Key References:

-<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/pneumo/downloads/pneumo-vaccine-timing.pdf> (2-24-23)

-<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html> (2-24-23)

-<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/downloads/slides-2022-10-19-20/03-Pneumococcal-Kobayashi-508.pdf> (2-24-23)

-Medication pricing by Elsevier, accessed Feb 2023

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