

Vaccinations

Why are flu and pneumonia vaccinations important for people with diabetes?

- If you have diabetes, you are three times more likely to die from the flu or pneumonia.
- A flu and pneumonia shot can protect you from getting sick during the flu season.

Are these vaccinations safe?

- Yes, flu and pneumonia shots are very safe, as long as you are two years of age or older.
- There is no chance of getting the flu or pneumonia from the shots.
- As with any shot, you might have mild swelling or redness, but that will go away after a day or two.

Is there anyone who should not get these shots?

- People who have had serious allergic reactions to eggs or past vaccines should talk with their doctor before getting the shot.
- It is also a good idea to talk to your doctor before getting the shots if you have a history of Guillain-Barre´ Syndrome (gil-li-an-bah-ray sin-drom), a disorder of your nervous system.
- Most doctors and nurses will suggest that people who are sick wait until they are well before getting the shots.
- If you are pregnant, check with a doctor or nurse before getting the shots.

Should I talk to my doctor before getting a shot?

- You should always talk to a doctor or nurse if you have questions about your health.
- However, you are able to get these vaccinations without getting a referral from your doctor.

How often should I get the flu or pneumonia shot?

- Getting one flu shot every year before the flu season begins should protect you from getting sick.
- Usually, one pneumonia shot is enough to protect you for a lifetime, but check with your doctor to be sure you are not one of the few who need more than one shot.
- A second pneumonia shot is sometimes needed five to ten years after your first, if any of the following are true:
 - you were 65 or older at the time of your first pneumonia shot,
 - you have a weakened immune system, or if you are on dialysis.

Will my insurance cover these vaccinations?

- Both the flu and pneumonia vaccines are covered by Medicare and many other health plans.

I do not have health insurance, where can I get my vaccinations?

- Call your local health department and ask where you may go to get these important vaccinations.

