

## In Brief

If you believe that you or a loved one may be at risk for pneumococcal pneumonia, speak to your doctor or nurse. They will answer any questions you have, and make arrangements for the vaccine to be given if you so desire.

## Vaccination Against Pneumonia



Information  
for residents  
and their families



Black Diamond Road  
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### What is Pneumococcal Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs in which thick fluid builds up in lung spaces that are normally filled with air.

Pneumococcus is a type of bacterium (germ) that normally lives in our mouths and on our skin. It normally does not cause trouble unless it gets into the chest or other places in the body where it is not supposed to go.

Pneumococcus is not the only germ that causes pneumonia, but it does account for nearly 25% of cases of pneumonia,

### Who gets Pneumococcal Pneumonia?

Some people are at greater risk for getting this type of pneumonia than others,

Persons at special risk:

- are 65 years or older;
- have any kind of chronic disease, especially of the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys or blood; and
- have diabetes mellitus

### What can I do to Prevent Illness

If you have one or more of the above risks, you should consider taking a vaccine against pneumococcal pneumonia.

Although no vaccine is 100% guaranteed, research has shown that many people benefit from this vaccine. It can either prevent the disease entirely, or make the illness shorter and lower the number of complications.

Lifestyle also has a great deal to do with disease prevention. You can help yourself to stay well by eating a balanced diet, getting enough exercise, rest and sleep, as well as washing your hands and brushing your teeth often.

### About the Vaccine

Like most injections, pneumococcal vaccine may cause some soreness and redness at the injection site. Rarely, a fever may occur as well. These discomforts are temporary, and can be treated with cold packs and, if necessary, a medication to bring the fever down.

The good news is that the vaccine is usually given to adults only once per lifetime.

It is important to obtain and keep a card or note from your doctor, stating that you have been given the vaccine. That way, other health professionals who treat you in the future will know that you are not to have it again.