



# Pneumococcal Polysaccharide (Pneu-P-23) - Pneumovax®23

The vaccine protects against infection caused by 23 types of the pneumococcus bacteria, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

## Who should get this vaccine? <sup>1</sup>

- Routinely provided to all adults 65 years of age and older, and all residents of nursing homes and chronic care homes.
- Also recommended for anyone 2 years of age and older who fits into the following high risk groups:
- Chronic cerebral spinal fluid leak.
- Chronic neurological condition that may impair clearance of saliva.
- Cardiac, pulmonary, liver or kidney disease (chronic).
- Diabetes.
- Nephrotic syndrome.
- Asthma (requiring medical care in the last 12 months).
- Sick cell.
- Anyone without a spleen or whose spleen is not working well.
- Congenital immunodeficiencies.
- Long term use of immunosuppressants.
- HIV infection.
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant.
- Malignant growths (tumours).
- Solid organ or islet transplant.
- Cochlear implant recipients.

## How well does this vaccine work? <sup>1</sup>

- 80% of healthy adults are protected with this vaccine.
- 50-80% of high risk individuals and the elderly are protected with this vaccine.
- Immunity does wane 5-10 years after vaccination, therefore a one time booster dose is recommended for some individuals.

## Is there an alternative to this vaccine?

At this time there are no other ways to prevent pneumococcal disease. Hand washing and covering the mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing can help reduce the spread of disease.

## Is this vaccine safe?

The risk of a serious reaction or side effect from this vaccine is much less than the risk of pneumococcal disease. If you experience any side effect worse than what is listed below, please seek medical advice and notify the health unit.

## Common side effects of this vaccine <sup>1</sup>

- Pain where needle was given.
- Redness.

- Swelling.
- Low grade fever

**Less common:**

- Seizures (febrile or not).

**Rare:**

- Arthus-like reaction (severe pain, swelling, hard lump where needle was given, edema, haemorrhage and occasionally dead tissue).

**Who should not receive this vaccine?**

- Anyone with an allergy to any of the vaccine components or who has had an allergic or anaphylactic reaction to this vaccine.
- Anyone who has received the vaccine Prevnar®13 in the last 8 weeks

**What is in this vaccine? <sup>2,3</sup>**

| <b>Pneumovax®23</b> | <b>Also found in...</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Sodium chloride     | Table salt              |
| Phenol              | Mouthwash               |

**What else do I need to know?**

It is important for you to keep a current record of your child's vaccines. When your child begins school you will be asked to provide a copy of this record to the school, who will forward it onto the health unit.

The health unit is required by law to keep immunization records for all children attending a day nursery or school. Health care providers do not share immunization records with the health unit. This is the parent's responsibility. You can share/update your child's record in the following ways:

Use the secure on-line form on our website – [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/immsonline](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/immsonline)

Fax a copy to 705-721-1495

Mail a copy to: VPD Program, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, 15 Sperling Drive, Barrie, ON, L4M 6K9.

Call Your Health Connection at 705-721-7520.

**References:**

Canadian Immunization Guide. Part 4-Active Vaccines: Pneumococcal Vaccine. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2015.

Canadian Immunization Guide. Part 1-Key Immunization Information 2013. Table 1: Types and contents of vaccines available for use in Canada. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2015.

Moore, D. Your Child's Best Shot (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Canadian Paediatric Society, 2015.