

Immunizations support optimal aging and can reduce the risk of frailty

Who, what, when – Routine publicly funded immunizations for adults in Ontario

Adults should receive vaccinations as part of their routine preventive care to support health, wellbeing, and optimal aging. Vaccines also reduce the risk of cardiovascular death and stroke, and possibly dementia.

Other vaccines or vaccination schedules may be indicated for those at higher risk and are not included here.

Vaccine	Timing
Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (3-in-1) vaccine	Once in adulthood
Tetanus and diphtheria (2-in-1)	Every 10 years
Influenza	Every fall *Adults ≥65 should receive a high-dose vaccine if available
COVID-19	Every fall
Pneumococcal	At age 65 and older
Shingles	2-dose series between ages 65-70 is publicly-funded, but recommended at age 50 years or older for those who are willing to purchase the vaccine, or have private insurance.
RSV	At age 75 and older

Why – the role of immunization in healthy aging

As people age, changes in immune function may increase risks of acquiring vaccine-preventable diseases, contribute to longer recovery times and increase the risk of more severe complications from infections.

Illness can further affect immune function, leading to increased susceptibility to future infections and contributing to the risk of frailty.

Frailty is not an inevitable part of aging and can be influenced by a range of factors, including physical activity, social connection, nutrition, and vaccination.

Increased frailty is associated with reduced physical function, participation in daily activities, and the ability to maintain independence.

Immunization, by preventing and lessening the severity of infection, is a powerful and safe tool for promoting healthy aging.

New Guidelines from the [Canadian Cardiovascular Harmonized National Guideline Endeavour](#) provide 3 recommendations around vaccination:

- Routinely offering all individuals, particularly those older than 65 years, vaccination against influenza to reduce the risk of cardiovascular death and stroke and possibly dementia.
- Routinely offering all individuals, particularly those older than 65 years, the pneumococcal vaccine to reduce the risk of MI and stroke.
- Routinely offering all individuals, particularly those older than 65 years, vaccination against herpes zoster to reduce the risk of MI and stroke, and possibly dementia.

What else – helpful resources, brochures, patient education materials

- [Immunize Canada: Added Benefits of Vaccination](#)
 - [Management of brain–heart multimorbidity: a clinical practice guideline](#)
 - **Clinical practice guideline developed by the Canadian Cardiovascular Harmonized National Guideline Endeavour (C-CHANGE):** provides a review of evidence for pneumococcal, influenza, and herpes zoster vaccines in preventing cardiovascular disease and dementia risk
 - **CMAJ 2026 March 30;198:E425-39. doi: 10.1503/cmaj.251137**
- [Canadian Frailty Network: AVOID Frailty - Take Control](#): a public health campaign developed by the Canadian Frailty Network to promote assessing and reducing risk factors leading to the development of frailty which includes vaccination as one of the 5 components.
 - [V is for vaccinate](#)
 - [Vaccination FAQ](#)
- [Active Aging Canada: Don't Let Influenza Interrupt Healthy Aging](#)
- [International Federation on Ageing](#)
 - [Vaccines4life.com](#)
 - [Importance of Immunization for All Ages](#)

Selected references:

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