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Pneumococcal Immunization Program Update: Pneu-C-21 (Capvaxie®) Being Introduced for Routine Vaccination for 65+

Attention: Physicians, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Community Health Centres, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, Family Health Teams, Long Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams, Indigenous Healthcare & Community

Date: August 8, 2026

Ontario has announced that routine pneumococcal immunization for those 65 years and older will be transitioning from Pneu-C-20 (Pneumovax 20™) to Pneu-C-21 (Capvaxie®), effective August 17, 2026. **Those who have already received their routine publicly funded dose of pneumococcal vaccine after the age of 65 are not eligible for an additional dose of Pneu-C-21. This transition is only for those who are newly eligible or who are 65+ and have not yet received their routine pneumococcal senior dose.**

Pneu-C-21 is expected to provide broader protection against invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) compared to the Pneu-C-20 vaccine for individuals 65 years of age and older. While Pneu-C-21 protects against ten strains included in Pneu-C-20, it protects against 11 additional strains that are known to cause serious illness in older adults.

Figure 1: Serotype Coverage in Currently Authorized Pneumococcal Vaccines

Vaccine	1	4	5	6B	9V	14	18C	19F	23F	15B*	3	6A†	7F	19A	22F	33F	8	10A	11A	12F	9N	17F	20†	15A	15C*	16F	23A	23B	24F	31	35B	2	
PPV23																																	
PCV13																																	
PCV15																																	
PCV20																																	
PCV21																																	

PCV20 contains 9 unique, non-cross-reactive serotypes (vs. PCV21)

PCV20 and PCV21 contain 10 shared serotypes

PCV21 contains 10 unique, non-cross-reactive serotypes (vs. PCV20)

PPV=pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine; PCV=pneumococcal conjugate vaccine

* Serotypes 15B/C are considered cross-reactive due to reversible switching between serotypes during infection.

† Serotype 6A provides cross-protection against serotype 6C.

‡ PCV21 contains serotype 20A.

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Ontario's Pneumococcal Vaccine Programs	Vaccine Name	Abbreviation
Routine Infant/Child Program - Given at 2, 4, & 12 months - Or as per catch up schedule	Vaxneuvance®	Pneu-C-15
Routine Adult Program Given as a single dose at 65 years of age	Capvaxive®	Pneu-C-21
High-Risk Program - Given to anyone 6 weeks through 64 years who is at high-risk of IPD* For schedules, refer to appropriate HCP fact sheet Pneumococcal Immunization for Children Pneumococcal Immunization for Adults	Prevnar 20™	Pneu-C-20

***The following groups are high-risk for invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD):**

- Asplenia (functional or anatomic), splenic dysfunction
- Congenital (primary) immunodeficiencies involving any part of the immune system, including B-lymphocyte (humoral) immunity, T-lymphocyte (cell) mediated immunity, complement system (properdin, or factor D deficiencies), or phagocytic functions
- HIV infection
- Immunocompromising therapy including use of long-term systemic corticosteroid, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, post-organ transplant therapy, certain anti-rheumatic drugs and other immunosuppressive therapy
- Malignant neoplasms, including leukemia and lymphoma
- Sickle-cell disease and other sickle cell hemoglobinopathies
- Solid organ or islet cell transplant (recipient)
- Hepatic cirrhosis due to any cause
- Chronic renal disease, including nephrotic syndrome
- Chronic cardiac disease
- Chronic liver disease, including hepatitis B and C
- Chronic respiratory disease, excluding asthma, except those treated with high-dose corticosteroid therapy
- Chronic neurologic conditions that may impair clearance of oral secretions
- Diabetes mellitus
- Cochlear implant recipients (pre/post implant)
- Chronic cerebral spinal fluid leak
- Residents of chronic care facilities or wards
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT) (recipient)

Pneumococcal vaccines can be given at the same time as other vaccines, or at any time before or after other vaccines. People should wait at least one year if receiving two different Pneumococcal vaccines (i.e., if received Pneu-C-20 and now due for Pneu-C-21, should wait a minimum of one year).

Vaccine Information	Pneu-C-15 (Vaxneuvance®)	Pneu-C-20 (Prennar 20™)	Pneu-C-21 (Capvaxive®)
Manufacturer	Merck	Pfizer	Merck
Dosage	0.5 mL	0.5 mL	0.5 mL
Route	IM	IM	IM
Format	1 prefilled syringe or 10 prefilled syringes	10 prefilled syringes	1 prefilled syringe or 10 prefilled syringes
Package Size (cm)	1 pack: 13.3 x 4.9 x 3.2 10 pack: 11.4 x 5.2 x 12.4	12.45 x 9.91 x 5.33	1 pack: 13.3 x 4.9 x 3.2 10 pack: 11.4 x 5.2 x 12.4

Pneu-C-21 has been added to the [Online Vaccine Order Form](#) for facilities to order vaccine supply.

For more information about the program transition, the vaccines, or eligibility criteria refer to the following:

- [Health Care Provider Fact Sheet: Pneumococcal Immunization for Children Aged 6 Weeks to 17 Years](#)
- [Health Care Provider Fact Sheet: Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccines for Adults Aged 18 Years and Older](#)
- [Vaccine Fact Sheet: Pneumococcal Vaccine Program for Individuals Aged 6 Weeks and Older](#)

If you have any questions, please call our Health Care Provider Immunization phone line at 705-721-7520 ext. 8806.