



## Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV 13) Vaccine

**Keep your child safe.  
Get all shots on time.**

By getting all shots on time, your child can be protected from many diseases over a lifetime.

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure.

### What is the PCV 13 vaccine?

The PCV 13 vaccine replaces the PCV 7 vaccine which has been used in B.C. since 2003. The PCV 13 vaccine protects against 13 types of pneumococcal bacteria. The vaccine is approved by Health Canada.

The PCV 13 vaccine is provided free as part of your child's routine immunizations. Call your local public health nurse or doctor to make an appointment.

### Who should get the PCV 13 vaccine?

The PCV 13 vaccine is given as a series of three doses or shots. Children get the first dose at 2 months of age, the second at 4 months, and the third at 12 months. The vaccine is given at the same time as other childhood immunizations.

PCV 13 Vaccine	Child's Age at Vaccination
1 <sup>st</sup> dose	2 months
2 <sup>nd</sup> dose	4 months
3 <sup>rd</sup> dose	12 months

An extra dose of vaccine is given at 6 months of age for children who have:

- no spleen, or a spleen that is not working properly;

- sickle-cell disease;
- an immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment;
- chronic liver disease, including cirrhosis, chronic hepatitis B or hepatitis C;
- chronic kidney, heart or lung disease;
- an islet cell or solid organ transplant, or a cochlear (inner ear) implant, or are waiting for one;
- had a stem cell transplant;
- a condition that makes it hard to clear fluids from the mouth or throat; or
- diabetes, cystic fibrosis or a chronic cerebrospinal fluid leak.

Children under 5 years of age with any of the above medical conditions who have completed a PCV 7 vaccine series should also receive one dose of PCV 13 vaccine.

At 2 years of age, a child with any of the above medical conditions should also receive a dose of pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, which protects against more types of pneumococcal bacteria. For more information, see HealthLink BC File

[#62b Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine.](#)

It is important to keep a record of all immunizations received.

### Benefits of PCV 13 vaccine

The PCV 13 vaccine is the best way to protect your child against pneumococcal disease, a serious and sometimes fatal disease.

When you get your child vaccinated, you help protect others as well.

## Possible reactions after the PCV 13 vaccine

Vaccines are very safe. It is much safer to get the vaccine than to get pneumococcal disease.

Common reactions to the vaccine may include soreness, redness and swelling where the shot was given. Some may also have fever or drowsiness, crankiness or a loss of appetite. These reactions are mild and generally last 1 to 2 days.

In Canada, an increase in seizures caused by fever has not been seen in children after getting the PCV 13 vaccine and influenza vaccine at the same time. However, in the United States, a small number of children, about 1 in 2,000 to 3,000, have had seizures after getting these vaccines together. These seizures are not harmful.

Acetaminophen or Tylenol® can be given for fever or soreness. ASA or Aspirin® should NOT be given to anyone under 20 years of age due to the risk of Reye Syndrome.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. If this happens after you leave the clinic, call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number. This reaction can be treated and occurs in less than one in a million people who get the vaccine.

Report serious or unexpected reactions to your health care provider.

## Who should not get the PCV 13 vaccine?

Speak with your health care provider if your child has had a life-threatening reaction to a previous dose of pneumococcal vaccine, or to any component of the vaccine.

## What is pneumococcal infection?

Pneumococcal infection is caused by a germ or bacteria. It can cause serious and life-threatening infections including meningitis, an infection of the lining that covers the brain, and septicemia, an infection of the blood. For every 30 children who get sick with a pneumococcal infection, 1 will die. Permanent complications of infection include brain damage and deafness.

Pneumococcal infection is spread from one person to another by coughing, sneezing or close face-to-face contact. It can also be spread through saliva or spit when people share food or drinks. Babies and children can become sick through sharing soothers, bottles or toys used by other children.

Pneumococcal disease is now rare among children in B.C. because of routine childhood vaccination programs.

For more information on immunizations visit Immunize BC at [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca).

For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/index.stm](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles/index.stm) or your local public health unit.

Click on [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca) or call 8-1-1 for non-emergency health information and services in B.C.

For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance, call 7-1-1 in B.C.

Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.



ImmunizeBC



BC Centre for Disease Control  
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