

What You Need to Know About Vaccines

Influenza/Flu Vaccine

Influenza/Flu is a contagious disease mainly spread through coughing, sneezing, and close contact. Symptoms can include fever, chills, sore throat, fatigue, cough, headache, runny or stuffy nose. The flu vaccine can help keep you from getting the flu or make the flu less severe. It also can help you from spreading the flu to your family or other people. The flu shot is inactivated, which means it cannot cause the flu. Every year, a new flu vaccine is made because the virus changes every year, so it is very important to get the vaccine every year. It takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after vaccination so it is better to get the vaccine early.



Everyone should receive the flu shot every year, especially pregnant women, children, and the elderly. Do not take the vaccine if you have a life threatening allergy to any component in the vaccine, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, or if you are not feeling well. Side effects may include body aches, redness/swelling at injection site, or low-grade fever.

Your local pharmacist can give the following vaccines to adults 18 and older:

- Influenza/Flu
- Pneumonia
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap)
- Meningitis
- Shingles (if over 60 years old)

Pneumococcal Vaccine

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria that can spread from close contact. It can cause ear, lung, blood, and brain/spinal cord infections which can be very serious. There are 2 types of pneumococcal vaccines: PPSV23 and PCV13 which your pharmacist will choose depending on your age and health conditions. All adults 65 and older should receive the vaccine once in their lifetime. Due to certain health condi-

tions, people, starting as young as 2 years old may need up to 3 vaccines throughout their lifetime. For this reason it is very important to talk to your pharmacist or physician to see if you qualify. Do not take this vaccine if you have a life threatening allergy to any component in the vaccine or if you are not feeling well. Side effects may include redness/swelling at injection site, low grade fever, or fatigue.



Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap)

Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis are serious diseases that can be prevented with the Tdap vaccine. Tetanus is spread through cuts, scratches, or wounds whereas diphtheria and pertussis are spread from coughing or sneezing. Tetanus disease can cause painful muscle tightening, diphtheria can cause breathing problems, paralysis, or death, and pertussis (whooping cough) can cause severe coughing spells and difficulty breathing. Tdap should be given to adolescents and adults at least once in their lifetime. They should also get a booster of tetanus/diphtheria (Td) every 10 years.

Tdap should also be given to pregnant women during every pregnancy as well as anyone who will have close contact with a baby younger than 1 year old. Do not get the vaccine if you ever had a life-threatening allergy to any component in the vaccine, seizures or coma within 7 days after a dose of DTaP or Tdap (however, you can still get Td vaccine). Side effects may include pain at injection site, redness/swelling, mild fever, or body aches.



Come in to Kings Pharmacy to get your vaccine by a licensed pharmacist today!

Ask about the City-wide Immunization Registry (CIR) to keep an electronic vaccine record that can be accessed by all your physicians!

Meningitis

Meningitis is a serious disease that can cause an infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord, and the blood. It can occur even in otherwise healthy people so it is important for at risk-populations to receive the vaccine. This includes infants younger than 12 months, adolescents and young adults 16-23 years old, and people at risk due to outbreaks in their community. There are 2 vaccines

available for meningitis. For people 2 months-55 years old, a 2 dose vaccine should be used and for people older than 55, a single dose vaccine should be used. Do not get the vaccine if you have a severe life-threatening allergy to any component in the vaccine. For pregnant and breastfeeding women, or patients with a mild illness, caution should be used and you should discuss whether the vaccine is appropriate to get.



Shingles

Shingles is a painful skin rash also called Herpes Zoster or Zoster. The rash appears on one side of the face or body and lasts 2-4 weeks. Symptoms include severe pain, fever, headache, chills, and upset stomach. The virus that causes shingles is the same one that causes varicella (chicken pox). People who have had the chicken pox are at risk for developing shingles especially above the age of 50 with weak immune systems. The vaccine is recommended in people 60 and older.

Do not get the vaccine if you have a life-threatening allergy to any component in the vaccine including gelatin or neomycin, or are pregnant. If you currently have AIDS, are going through cancer treatment, taking medications that lower your immune system, or are sick, talk to your pharmacist or physician before getting the vaccine. Side effects may include redness/soreness or itching at injection site.