

Vaccination: an important component of maintaining adult health

Over 42,000 adults die from vaccine-preventable diseases or their complications each year in the US.¹ You can help make a difference by recommending vaccinations for appropriate patients. In a survey conducted for the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) in November 2010, 88% of adult patients said a strong recommendation from their physician would influence their vaccination decision.²

Although childhood vaccination rates are at or near an all-time high,³ a majority of adults do not receive routine vaccinations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).⁴

Estimated proportion of adults (≥19 years) who received vaccination with select vaccines from National Health Interview Survey, 2011

	% Reported Receiving Vaccination
Hepatitis A (19-49 years), ≥2 doses	12.5
Hepatitis B (19-49 years), ≥3 doses	35.9
Herpes zoster (≥60 years)	15.8
Human papillomavirus (HPV) (women 19-26 years), ≥1 dose	29.5
Pneumococcal (19-64 years, high-risk*)	20.1
Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis) (19-64 years) past six years [†]	12.5

* Adults were considered at high risk for pneumococcal disease if they had ever been told by a doctor or other healthcare professional that they had diabetes, emphysema, coronary heart disease, angina, heart attack, or other heart condition; had been told by a doctor or other healthcare professional that they had cancer during the previous 12 months (excluding nonmelanoma skin cancer); had ever been told by a doctor or other healthcare professional that they had lymphoma, leukemia, or other blood cancer; had been told by a doctor or other healthcare professional that they had chronic bronchitis or weak or failing kidneys during the preceding 12 months; had an asthma episode or attack during the previous 12 months; or were current smokers.

[†] Respondents who had received a tetanus shot in the past 10 years were asked if their most recent shot was given in 2005 or later. Respondents who had received a tetanus shot since 2005 were asked if they were told that their most recent tetanus shot included the pertussis or whooping cough vaccine. Among 25,783 respondents aged 19–64 years, those without a “yes” or “no” classification for tetanus vaccination in the past 10 years (n = 1,118 [4.3%]) or for tetanus vaccination during 2005–2011 (n = 803 [3.1%]) and those who reported tetanus vaccination during 2005–2011, but were not told the vaccine type by the healthcare provider (n = 5,501 [21.3%]) or did not know the vaccine type (Td or Tdap) (n = 881 [3.4%]) were excluded. This yields a sample of 17,480 respondents aged 19–64 years for whom Tdap vaccination status could be assessed. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations on use of Tdap in certain adults aged ≥65 years were published January 14, 2011.

Adapted from CDC, National Health Interview Survey, United States, 2011.

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Recommended adult vaccinations

The CDC recommends many vaccinations for adults depending on age and risk for infection.⁵ Not all vaccines are recommended for all adults. Please consult the adult vaccination schedule published by CDC.

The recommended adult vaccinations may include:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Herpes zoster (shingles)
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Meningococcal
- Pneumococcal
- Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)
- Varicella

Talk with your patients about the importance of adult vaccinations.

References: **1.** US Department of Health and Human Services. Immunization and infectious diseases. Healthypeople.gov Web site. <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=23>. Updated May 2, 2010. Accessed December 10, 2013. **2.** National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. Survey: Disconnect in What Doctors Think They Say About Vaccines and What Patients Hear. <http://www.adultvaccination.com/newsroom/Events/2010-cdc-vaccination-rates-news-conference/2010-Survey-Backgrounder.pdf>. Accessed October 22, 2013. **3.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccines & Immunizations. National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) Background. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/overview.html>. Accessed October 22, 2014. **4.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Noninfluenza vaccination coverage among adults - United States, 2011. *MMWR*. 2013; 62(04):66-72. **5.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended immunization schedule for adults aged 19 years and older - United States, 2013. *MMWR*. 2013;62(01):9-19.

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