

# Vaccines for CKD Patients: Influenza (Flu) and Pneumonia



## Vaccinations are not just for kids!

Vaccines have greatly reduced many infections that previously killed or seriously hurt people and are especially important if you have certain health conditions such as kidney disease. By getting vaccinated you will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill or dying from these diseases and also protect the people around you. At Dallas Nephrology Associates, we encourage our patients to stay current with their vaccines and offer several different vaccines at our clinics.

Vaccines work by preparing your immune system for a possible infection by stimulating your body to produce antibodies (Antibodies are one way the body fights infection). After being vaccinated, if you should be exposed to the real infection, then your body is already prepared to fight the infection with the antibodies already in place. Some vaccines are given once, others are given yearly and others are given in a series over several months or years.

Vaccines are among the safest type of therapy that is available with millions of people being protected from serious illness. Vaccines can have side effects, but, most people who get vaccinated have no side effects or mild side effects that go away on their own within a few days. (However, patients should always ask their doctors for medical advice about the risk and benefit of vaccinations.)

**Ask your doctor about the timing and frequency of your vaccinations.**

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# Types of Vaccines for CKD Patients

## Influenza (Flu) Vaccine

Flu—short for influenza—is an illness caused by one of the influenza viruses. Flu viruses infect the nose, upper airways, throat, and lungs and spread easily. Many people with the flu spread the virus before they even know they are sick. Flu can cause serious illness, especially for older people, and those with certain chronic medical conditions, like asthma and diabetes. Flu vaccines have a good safety record and have been used in the United States for more than 50 years. There are 2 types of vaccines that we offer:

Influenza Adjunctive (for age > 65 years old) and Influenza Vaccine Quadrivalent (for age <65).

Given: Yearly. Because flu viruses are constantly changing, new vaccines are made each year to protect against the flu viruses that are likely to cause illness for that particular year.

## Pneumonia Vaccine

Pneumonia is the second most common infection in the U.S. and can be associated with severe complications including death. One organism that can cause pneumonia is the bacteria, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. Infection with this bacteria can be mild, but can also cause serious symptoms, lifelong disability, or death. It effects 1 out of every 100 people each year.

*Streptococcus pneumoniae* disease spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Some people may not even feel sick, but they could have the bacteria in their noses and throats and can still spread the disease. There are 2 types of “pneumonia” vaccines that are given to people with chronic kidney disease: Pneumovax ®23 and Prevnar 13®

Given: If no prior vaccine, then Prevnar 13® is given first with Pneumovax ®23 to follow (2-12 months later)

If prior Pneumovax ®23 has been given, then Prevnar 13® to follow (1 year after Pneumovax ®23). Pneumovax ®23 will need to be repeated 5 years after the 1st dose if given before the age of 65.

## Other Vaccines

There may be other vaccines that your doctor may well recommend and these include vaccines for Hepatitis B Virus, Tetanus/ Diphtheria/ Pertussis, Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella, Varicella (chickenpox) or Shingles.

Ask your doctor about the timing and frequency of your vaccinations.

## Winter Wellness Tips

- Get a flu shot
- Stay hydrated
- Keep exercising
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a balanced diet
- Keep your hands clean
- Relax



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