



## Renfrew County and District Health Unit

# FACT SHEET

## PNEUMOCOCCAL CONJUGATE VACCINE

### What is Pneumococcal disease?

It is caused by a germ called the pneumococcus. It can cause a number of infections such as acute ear, sinus, bone and joint infection. These infections can lead to:

- Pneumonia (lung infection)
- Bacteremia (blood infection)
- Meningitis (lining of the brain & spinal cord)

Pneumonia, bacteremia, meningitis, and bone and joint infections are very serious illnesses and can cause death. Without treatment, all children who get this suffer damage that lasts the rest of their lives. Even with treatment, about 1 in 5 children with pneumococcal meningitis die.

### How is pneumococcal disease spread?

Pneumococci are quite common and live in the back of the nose and throat of about 1 in 3 infants, children and adults without causing any illness. These individuals are called carriers. To spread from an infected person to another person requires close, direct contact, through activities such as kissing, coughing and sneezing. It can also be spread through saliva when sharing items such as food or drinks, cups, drinking straws, toys, and musical instruments.

### At what age should my child be vaccinated with the pneumococcal vaccine?

Children should have the first vaccine at two months of age. Two more vaccines are needed – at four and 12 months of age. If your child misses a dose, he/she should get it as soon as possible.

### Who else is eligible for this vaccine?

Adults 50 years of age and older with specific health risks qualify for publicly funded vaccine. Please consult Renfrew County and District Health Unit or your health care provider.

### Is the vaccine safe?

Yes. Series side effects are rare. Mild pain, swelling or redness for a few days is common at the spot where the needle was given. Other side effects such as headache, dizziness and nausea may occur.

### Who should not have the pneumococcal vaccines?

- Anyone who is ill with a fever or infection worse than a common cold.
- People who have had allergic reaction to the vaccine or something in the vaccine.
- Anaphylaxis to pneumococcal vaccine

### How do I keep track of this vaccination?

After you receive any immunization, make sure your personal immunization record such as the “Yellow Card” is updated. As an adult it is valuable to know when you were last immunized as well. Keep your record in a safe place!

### Who should I talk to if I have any more questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Health Info Line at **613-735-8666** or **1-800-267-1097 Ext. 666**

To contact us or for more information		
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Source: Adapted from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Immunization Fact Sheet December 2014

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