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COPD AND VACCINES: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW.

Each year, millions of adults in the United States get sick from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. People at risk for and with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are at higher risk for serious problems from certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Complications could include worsening of symptoms, hospitalizations, and even death. Talking with your healthcare provider about getting vaccinated is an important part of staying healthy and managing the disease.

Why Are Vaccines Important?

- COPD causes airways to swell and become blocked with mucus, which can make it hard to breathe. Certain vaccine-preventable diseases can also increase swelling of airways and lungs. The combination of the two can lead to pneumonia and other serious respiratory illnesses, even if the condition is mild and symptoms are controlled.
- Vaccinations provide the best protection against preventable diseases such as the flu – or influenza – and pneumococcal disease.
- Vaccinations are one of the safest ways to protect your health, even if you are taking prescription medications. Side effects are usually mild and go away on their own and severe side effects are very rare.

What Vaccines Do You Need?

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people with or at risk for COPD get a yearly flu (influenza) vaccine.
- People with chronic lung disease, including COPD, should also get vaccinated against pneumococcal disease with either one or two vaccines, depending on what your healthcare provider offers.
- Chronic lung diseases, such as COPD, can make you more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19. Talk to your healthcare provider about getting vaccinated.
- Your healthcare provider may recommend additional vaccines based on your lifestyle, travel habits, and other factors.

Getting Vaccinated

Talk to your healthcare provider about which vaccines you need to help you stay healthy. For more information on vaccines, visit **www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults**.

Adults can get vaccines at doctors' offices, pharmacies, workplaces, health clinics and other locations. To find a place near you, go to **www.vaccines.gov**.

Most health insurance plans cover recommended vaccines. Check with your insurance provider for details and for a list of vaccine providers covered by your plan.

For more information about COPD, visit **nhlbi.nih.gov/BreatheBetter**.

   National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

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