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The Art of Keeping Up-to-Date on Immunizations

There are many challenges to keeping patients up to date on vaccine recommendations. In the last few years there have been many changes and updates to immunization schedules. This has resulted in the challenge of maintaining patient confidence in what vaccines can do for them. Also, the issue of how vaccines are being funded can be overwhelming for adults without broad healthcare coverage who are seeking protection and support against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Table 1 Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule for Ages 18 Years or Younger, United States, 2025

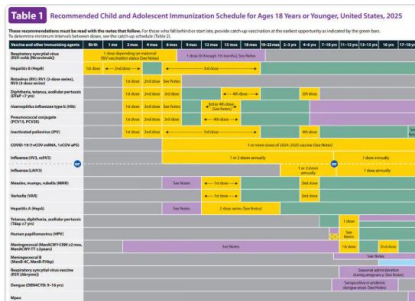
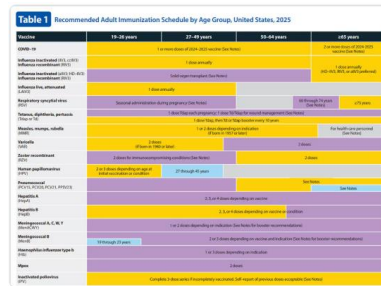


Table 1 Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule by Age Group, United States, 2025



Updated Immunization Schedules

Last fall the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated many recommendations to vaccine schedules for both children and adults. It can be challenging for public health and healthcare practitioners to stay up to date with all the changes, but there is a way to tackle this problem. [Immunize.org](https://immunize.org) publishes a weekly newsletter providing the most current updates to vaccine recommendations, summaries for recent Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meetings, and many other resources. Subscribe to the newsletter on the website.

One topic of recent confusion is the PCV vaccine, which protects against serious pneumococcal infection. In the latest recommendations for adults, the greatest change recommends PCV vaccine for anybody 50 years and up. There are several variations of PCV, which can add to the confusion. There are different recommendations for additional populations. A job aid can make things it easier for providers to follow recommendations: [Pneumococcal Vaccine Timing for Adults](#).



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CDC also developed a job aid [PneumoRecs VaxAdvisor App for Vaccine Providers | Pneumococcal | CDC](#), an app which makes the task simpler for a provider to determine the appropriate vaccine schedule and/or PCV vaccine for a patient. The CDC just released a computer-based [PneumoRecs](#) tool as well.



Vaccine Hesitancy



With all of these changes come questions for patients and providers alike. Some patients have developed a sense of hesitancy in receiving vaccines, while others require much research and support to make the right choice for themselves. A new initiative, [RISE](#), offers a number of tools and resources to assist providers in the process of encouraging all patients to have all “Routine Immunizations on Schedule for Everyone”.

For providers there is also free continuing education credit available through CDC’s [Fostering a Culture of Immunization in Your Practice](#) which provides many suggestions for developing a practice that is supportive of vaccinations. Finally, the following is a helpful article highlighting methods on [“Meeting the challenge of vaccine hesitancy”](#) from the Cleveland Journal of Medicine.

How to cover vaccine costs

Another question that arises, especially for the adult patients, is, “Are vaccines free?” The short answer is, “No, vaccines are not free”. The better answer is there are many ways to get reduced cost and/or free vaccine if a person understands how to obtain this support. Most insurance plans cover CDC-recommended vaccines; however, many have very specific guidance on where these vaccines can be given so it is best to contact the insurance company to verify vaccine coverage. If a person is not covered by insurance, there is the Childhood Vaccine Program that provides free vaccines to children under 19. There are also limited quantities of free vaccine for eligible adults through the state’s Adult Vaccine Program. More information about these programs is at the following link: [Eligibility for Publicly Funded Vaccines: A Guide for Providers](#). Finally, the local health jurisdiction may be able to recommend reduced cost options for receiving vaccines.

Resources

CDC Vaccines & Immunizations: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/by-age/index.html>

Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/>

CDC PCV Job Aid: <https://www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/downloads/Vaccine-Timing-Adults-JobAid.pdf>

CDC PCV recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal/hcp/vaccine-recommendations/app.html>

RISE: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/php/rise/index.html>

CDC CE for “Fostering a Culture of Immunization in Your Practice”:
<https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1121648/details>

Cleveland Journal of Medicine: https://www.ccjm.org/content/91/9_suppl_1/S50

Publicly Funded Vaccine Programs: <https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/348-577-EligibilityPubliclyFundedVaccinesGuide.pdf>