

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Have You Gotten Your Pneumococcal Vaccine?

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages adults aged 65 years and older to check with their healthcare provider to see if they have gotten their pneumococcal vaccinations.

Pneumococcal disease can be very serious. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) an estimated 150,000 hospitalizations from pneumococcal pneumonia and approximately 3,250 deaths happen each year from pneumococcal disease. The number of deaths has dropped dramatically since the introduction of effective vaccines for this disease.

“Young children and adults aged 65 and older are at the highest risk for becoming ill with pneumococcal disease,” states Melissa Propp, RN, Clinic Manager at SWNPHD. “People with chronic medical conditions such as chronic heart disease, cochlear implants, diabetes, and smokers are also at increased risk of developing this disease.”

Symptoms of pneumococcal pneumonia include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, ear infections, sinus infections, and on some occasions, it may cause meningitis infections as well as blood infections.

The American Committee of Immunizations Practices (ACIP) and the CDC have recently updated the adult vaccination schedule. For those age 65+, it now includes one dose of the new Prevnar 20, or one dose of Prevnar 15 followed by one dose of Pneumovax 23 one year later. Adults 19 to 64 years old with certain medical conditions may also be eligible for these vaccines.

Infants and children also receive several immunizations to protect them from pneumococcal disease. They receive Prevnar 13 at 2, 4, 6 and 12-15 months. Children usually receive their pneumococcal vaccines at their Well Baby appointments with their primary care provider.

Contact your health care provider to find out if you need your pneumococcal vaccines. If you have questions about these shots or other immunizations, contact Melissa Propp, RN, Clinic Manager at (308) 345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook and Instagram or view the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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