



CELEBRATING 19 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

MEDICAL PRACTICE CONSULTANTS, INC.

ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS

INFLUENZA AND PNEUMOCOCCAL POLYSACCHARIDE VACCINE (PPV)

Influenza is a contagious disease that is caused by the influenza virus. Influenza is a serious illness that can lead to pneumonia. An average of 36,000 Americans die each year from influenza and its complications.

All adults age 65 and older should get both the influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations. Medicare beneficiaries who are under age 65 but have a chronic illness, such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, or End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) should get the influenza vaccination.

Influenza Vaccine Risk Factors for Influenza: Medicare provides coverage for the influenza vaccine and its administration for all Medicare beneficiaries regardless of risk for the disease; however, some individuals are at greater risk for contracting influenza. Vaccination is recommended for individuals that fall within one or more of the high risk groups.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that the following people get a seasonal flu vaccination each year:

- Individuals aged 50 or older,
- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday,
- Pregnant women,
- Individuals of any age who have certain chronic medical conditions,
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, and
- People who live with or care for those at high risk of complications from the flu, including health care workers, household contact of persons at high risk of complications from the flu, or household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age.

Who Should Not Get the Influenza Vaccine: According to the CDC, the following groups should not be vaccinated without consulting a physician:

- Individuals with a severe allergy to chicken eggs,
- Individuals who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past,
- Individuals who previously had onset of Guillain-Barre syndrome during the 6 weeks after receiving the influenza vaccine,
- Children less than 6 months of age, and
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever should wait until their symptoms lessen.

COVERAGE INFORMATION FOR INFLUENZA

Medicare provides coverage for one influenza vaccine per influenza season. However, Medicare provides coverage for more than one influenza vaccination per influenza season if it is reasonable and medically necessary.

Medicare provides coverage of the influenza vaccination as a Part B benefit. If the beneficiary receives the service from a Medicare-enrolled provider, the beneficiary will pay nothing (there is no coinsurance or copayment and no deductible for this benefit).

PNEUMOCOCCAL POLYSACCHARIDE VACCINE (PPV)

Risk Factors for Pneumococcal Infection: The CDC identifies the following high priority target groups for the pneumococcal vaccination:

- Individuals age 65 or older,
- Anyone 2 through 64 years of age who has long term health problems such as: heart or lung disease, sickle cell disease, diabetes, alcoholism, cirrhosis, leaks of cerebrospinal fluid or cochlear implant,



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Anyone 2 through 64 years of age who is taking a drug treatment that lowers the body's resistance to infection, such as:

- long-term steroids, certain cancer drugs, or radiation therapy, and
- Any adult 19 through 64 years of age who is a smoker or has asthma.

COVERAGE INFORMATION FOR PPV

Medicare provides coverage of PPV once in a lifetime generally for all beneficiaries. Medicare may provide additional vaccinations based on risk.

REVACCINATION

Beneficiaries considered to be at high risk may be revaccinated if at least 5 years have passed since the last covered PPV or are revaccinated if they are unsure of their vaccination status. Revaccination is limited to beneficiaries at the highest risk of serious infection and those likely to have a rapid decline in pneumococcal antibody levels. This group includes individuals with the following conditions:

- Functional or anatomic asplenia (e.g., sickle cell disease, splenectomy),
- HIV infection,
- Leukemia,
- Lymphoma,
- Hodgkin's disease,
- Multiple myeloma,
- Generalized malignancy,
- Chronic renal failure,
- Nephrotic syndrome, or
- Other conditions associated with immunosuppression such as organ or bone marrow transplantation, and those receiving immunosuppressive chemotherapy.

NOTE: Prior to vaccination, physicians should ask beneficiaries if they have been vaccinated with PPV. If patients are uncertain whether they have been vaccinated within the past 5 years, the provider should administer the vaccine. If patients are certain they have been vaccinated within the past 5 years, do not administer the vaccine.

Medicare provides coverage of PPV as a Part B benefit. There is no coinsurance or copayment and no deductible for this benefit.

HEPATITIS B VIRUS (HBV) VACCINE

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV), which is transmitted through percutaneous (i.e., puncture through the skin) or mucosal (i.e., direct contact with mucous membranes) exposure to infectious blood or body fluids. HBV attacks the liver and can cause chronic infection, resulting in cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, and death. An estimated 1.25 million Americans are chronically infected with HBV. Hepatitis B vaccination is the most effective measure to prevent HBV infection and its consequences.

Risk Factors for Hepatitis B Infection:

Medicare provides coverage for certain beneficiaries at high or intermediate risk for HBV infection. Vaccination is recommended for the following high risk groups:

- Individuals with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD),

- Individuals with hemophilia who received Factor VIII or IX concentrates,
- Clients of institutions for the mentally handicapped,
- Persons who live in the same household as an HBV carrier,
- Homosexual men, and Illicit injectable drug users.

Vaccination is recommended for the following intermediate risk groups:

- Staff in institutions for the mentally handicapped, and
- Workers in health care professions who have frequent contact with blood or blood-derived body fluids during routine work.

EXCEPTION: Persons in the above-listed groups would not be considered at high or intermediate risk if they have laboratory evidence positive for antibodies to HBV (ESRD patients are routinely tested for HBV antibodies as part of their continuing monitoring and therapy).

COVERAGE INFORMATION FOR HBV

Medicare provides payment for the HBV vaccine and its administration, for beneficiaries at intermediate to high risk of contracting HBV. Medicare requires that the HBV vaccine be administered under a physician's order with supervision.

Medicare provides coverage of the HBV vaccine as a Part B benefit. The coinsurance or copayment applies after the yearly Medicare Part B deductible has been met.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed a variety of educational resources as part of a broad outreach campaign to promote awareness and increase utilization of preventive services covered by Medicare. For more information about coverage, coding, billing, and reimbursement of Medicare-covered preventive services and screenings, visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35_PreventiveServices.asp on the CMS website.



April hath put a spirit of youth in everything.

~ William Shakespeare