



“Every year in the United States, more than 40,000 adults die from diseases against which they could have been vaccinated.”

— *Adult Vaccines: a Grown Up Thing to Do*, published in 2012 by the American Academy of Microbiology.

## Six Things Every LGBT Older Adult Should Know About Adult Vaccinations

You're never too old to get immunized! Getting immunized is a lifelong, life-protecting task. Don't leave your doctor's office without making sure you've had all the vaccinations you need. Keep these six points in mind, and see the other side of this sheet for a list of the vaccines most commonly recommended for adults.

### 1. Keep in mind the many benefits.

Staying healthy is the obvious reason to get vaccinated. But there are other benefits as well: vaccination saves money by reducing healthcare costs and preventing lost time at work, and it prevents the spread of disease to protect the people around you. Vaccines can also prevent the disabilities that can result from illness for older adults; for example a bout of influenza can result in loss of mobility if you are confined to bed for an extended period of time. And even if a vaccine is not 100 percent effective, it's likely to lessen the severity of your symptoms if you do get sick.

### 2. Stay healthy and current.

Vaccines don't last forever. Even if you were vaccinated at a younger age, the protection from some vaccines can wear off, or the virus or bacteria that the vaccine protects against changes; in either instance, your resistance is not as strong and you may require a booster.

### 3. Take chronic conditions into account.

Adults with chronic conditions such as HIV, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes or heart disease are more likely to develop complications from certain vaccine-preventable diseases, including long-term illness, hospitalization, and even death. Research shows that LGBT older people are more likely to deal with many chronic conditions.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Because of a lifetime of discrimination and barriers to LGBT-friendly healthcare (among other reasons), LGBT older people deal with significant health disparities across areas related to physical and mental health, including high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and more. Read more at [sageusa.org/issues/health](http://sageusa.org/issues/health)



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## 4. Get to know your needs.

Visit [vaccineinformation.org](http://vaccineinformation.org) and consult a healthcare professional to find out which vaccines you need, based on your medical history and age. For example, some LGBT older people are at greater risk for certain vaccine-preventable diseases, including hepatitis A and B.

## 5. Keep track of your vaccination history.

Keep records of your vaccines to make sure you're current and have maximum protection against vaccine-preventable diseases. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or other healthcare provider for a copy of your vaccination record.

## 6. Help spread the word.

All adults need immunizations to help them prevent getting and spreading serious diseases. After getting your vaccinations, talk to your friends and loved ones about getting protected, too!

# Recommended Vaccines

CDC recommends that all adults get the following vaccines:

- **Influenza** vaccine every year to protect against seasonal flu
- **Td vaccine** every 10 years to protect against tetanus
- **Tdap vaccine** once to protect against tetanus and diphtheria plus pertussis (whooping cough)

Other vaccines may be recommended depending on your age, job, health condition and vaccines you have had in the past.

These may include vaccines that protect against:

- **Shingles**
- **Pneumococcal disease**
- **Meningococcal disease**
- **Hepatitis A and B**
- **Chickenpox** (varicella)
- **Measles, mumps, and rubella**

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