



## Fact Sheet:

### Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine – 20 valent (Pneu-C-20)

#### 1. What is pneumococcal disease and what are the complications of this disease?

Pneumococcal disease is caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus (S.) pneumoniae*. Pneumococcal infections can range from ear and sinus infection to pneumonia and blood stream infection. Invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) causes more severe disease and occurs more often among young children, older adults and those with underlying medical or living conditions that place them at higher risk for disease. IPD is a major cause of illness and death worldwide.

#### 2. What are the contents of the Pneu-C-20 vaccine?

This vaccine works by helping the body to make its own antibodies, which protect against pneumococcal disease. This vaccine contains protein material from pneumococcal bacteria linked to a carrier protein (diphtheria toxin), providing protection against 20 types of pneumococcal bacteria. It is an inactivated vaccine and does not contain any living bacteria. Traces of non-medicinal ingredients are present to keep the vaccine stable, sterile, and to help it be more effective. A complete listing of contents is included in the product insert and may be requested from the immunizing provider.

There are no antibiotics within the vaccine, and no latex in the prefilled syringe used to administer the vaccine.

#### 3. What are the possible reactions from this vaccine and how are they managed?

The most common side effects occur within 24-48 hours after the injection and include swelling, redness, and tenderness at the site of injection. Decreased appetite, irritability, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, headache, muscle or joint pain, change in sleep pattern, drowsiness and fever may also occur.

It is not necessary to give acetaminophen with every immunization. If a person experiences discomfort or fever after receiving the vaccine, acetaminophen can relieve these symptoms.

Other side effects can occasionally occur after immunization - if you experience any side effects not listed above or you have questions or concerns speak to your healthcare professional.

The most serious but rare side effect is a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) which can be life threatening, and which usually occurs within 15-20 minutes of receiving the vaccine. Procedures are in place for the nurse to quickly respond to anaphylaxis by administering epinephrine.

**Please remain in the waiting room for 15 minutes after immunization. See a doctor or seek medical attention if any serious side effect occurs. Report any serious reaction to the Public Health Nurse.**

#### **4. What are the situations in which pneumococcal conjugate vaccine should not be given?**

The vaccine should not be given to:

- Those who have had an anaphylactic (severe or life threatening) reaction or who have a known sensitivity to any of the contents of the vaccine; reaction to any other vaccine that contains diphtheria toxoid.
- Those who are acutely ill, especially with a fever, should return later for the immunization.

Tell your healthcare professional if you or your child have been given a pneumococcal vaccine before or have recently received any other vaccine.

#### **5. What are the risks if this vaccine is not received?**

In addition to the very young and persons aged 65 years or older, individuals with certain medical conditions are at increased risk of developing pneumococcal infection and severe illness.

Pneumococcal disease can lead to long-lasting complications and can result in significant morbidity and mortality, especially for young children and others at increased risk of IPD. The most effective way to prevent these infections is through immunization. Pneu-C-20 is designed to prevent infection from 20 types of pneumococcal disease.

#### **6. Who should receive this vaccine?**

PNEU-C-20 should be offered to adults 65 years of age and older, or who are 18 to 64 years of age living with risk factors or living with immunocompromising conditions that place them at higher risk of pneumococcal disease. PNEU-C-20 may be used in children at increased risk of IPD who are initiating their pneumococcal vaccine series or for completion of a vaccine series when necessary.

Individuals should discuss their eligibility for this vaccine with their physician or local Public Health Nursing unit.

Revised May 2024