

# DIABETES AND ADULT VACCINATIONS



## Why Vaccines are Important?

Each year thousands of adults get sick from vaccine-preventable illnesses. People with type 1 and type 2 diabetes (even if well managed) are at higher risk of serious complications such as hospitalization or death from these diseases.

- Illnesses such as influenza and COVID-19 can raise your blood glucose levels. You will need to monitor your blood sugar levels more frequently when sick.
- Immunization provides the best protection against vaccine-preventable illnesses.
- Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health.
- Vaccine side effects are typically mild. Severe side effects are very rare.

## What Vaccines Do You Need?

The table below outlines the AHS and National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommendations for adult immunizations. Diabetes is not an immunosuppressive condition, but is considered a risk factor.

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Flu Vaccine                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually for all adults</li> </ul> <p><b>People with diabetes are at higher risk of serious complications from flu</b></p>   |
| COVID-19 Vaccine                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonal booster for all adults</li> <li>• Full series if previously unimmunized</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk of death is 12 times higher for people with COVID-19 and diabetes</b></p>                                   |
| Pneumonia<br>(Pneumococcal)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults 18-64 with chronic health condition (such as Diabetes)</li> <li>• A second dose should be received after age 65</li> </ul> <p><b>People with diabetes are at increased risk of death from pneumonia</b></p> |
| Shingles<br>(Herpes Zoster Virus)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults over 50 years old (or over 18 if immunocompromised)</li> </ul> <p><b>People with diabetes have a 24% increased risk of developing shingles</b></p>  |
| RSV<br>(Respiratory Syncytial Virus) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults over 50 years old with risk factors (such as Diabetes)</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk of hospitalization is 6 times higher for people with RSV and diabetes</b></p>  |

## How to Get Vaccinated?

- Influenza vaccines are routinely available from October thru March of each year at public immunization centers and local pharmacies.
- COVID-19 vaccines are available year-round if you are previously unimmunized.
- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about a prescription for other age and risk related vaccinations. These can typically be administered by a pharmacist at your local pharmacy.
- Some vaccines are covered by provincial healthcare and others may be covered by your benefits plan. Talk to your pharmacist about cost and coverage.