

Vaccines: What Medicare Pays For

Vaccines play a vital role in preventing illness and maintaining health, but knowing if and when Medicare pays for vaccines can be confusing. This fact sheet clarifies which parts of Medicare cover commonly recommended vaccines.

Vaccine Type	Medicare Coverage	Coverage Rules & Frequency
Influenza	Part B	Medicare pays for (and recommends) one shot every flu season Additional flu vaccines may be covered if considered medically necessary
Shingles	All Part D plans must cover	One shot paid for (and recommended) after age 60 Patient must check with plan to find out specific rules for administration and payment
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	Part B	Medicare pays for one shot, recommended for all adults aged 65+ and younger adults with chronic health conditions
Hepatitis B	Part B	Series of three shots, paid for by Medicare for high- or medium-risk individuals, including those with hemophilia, end stage renal disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions that lower resistance to infection

Flu shot

Each year in the United States, 9 out of 10 flu-related deaths and 6 out of 10 flu-related hospital stays occur among people aged 65+. An annual flu shot is one of the best preventive measures to help protect against the flu. The shot is available in both a regular strength dose and a high dose that provides extra immunity, which is often recommended for older adults.