

Rethink Prevnar 13 for Healthy Seniors

You'll start to see **LESS focus on giving Prevnar 13 to healthy seniors**...due to changes in CDC guidelines expected this fall.

We're used to giving immunocompetent adults 65 and older *Prevnar 13* followed by *Pneumovax 23* one year later...based on 2014 recommendations.

The idea was to further decrease pneumococcal infection rates.

But it turns out that seniors are mainly protected from strains in *Prevnar 13* by "herd immunity"...thanks to successful vaccination of kids.

Expect updated CDC recommendations to advise shared clinical decision-making with seniors when considering *Prevnar 13*.

Reassure that there aren't safety concerns with *Prevnar 13*...but there doesn't seem to be much benefit.

Prevnar 13 prevents just 1 case of outpatient pneumonia for every 2,600 healthy seniors immunized per year.

And giving *Prevnar 13* to healthy seniors only prevents 1 case of invasive pneumococcal disease for every 26,300 immunized per year.

Plus *Prevnar 13* costs about \$190/dose.

Focus on giving *Pneumovax 23* to seniors 65 and older. It protects against 11 serotypes not covered by herd immunity from *Prevnar 13*.

If healthy seniors still want both vaccines, give *Prevnar 13* a year later. For now, Medicare Part B still covers both if they're spaced at least one year apart.

Advise that immunocompromised adults (chronic renal failure, etc) of any age get both vaccines. Give *Prevnar 13*, then *Pneumovax 23* at least 8 weeks later...to limit unprotected time in these more vulnerable patients.

And continue to provide *Pneumovax 23* to adults UNDER 65 who smoke or have chronic conditions...and *Prevnar 13* as a routine vaccine in kids.

Use our *Which Pneumonia Vaccine Do I Need?* patient handout for help explaining these changes to patients...and check out our *Pneumococcal Vaccination in Adults: Who Gets What and When?* chart.

Key References:

- www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/meetings/slides-2019-06.html (08-20-19)
- MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2015;64(34):944-7
- MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2014;63(37):822-5
- Medication pricing by Elsevier, accessed Aug 2019

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