

Protect Yourself: Vaccines for Healthy Ageing

Why Vaccination Matters as We Age

As we get older, our immune system doesn't fight infections as well as it used to. This means we can get sicker more easily, take longer to recover, and have a higher chance of complications.

Vaccines can help protect you from serious illnesses that are more common and more dangerous as we age. These include the flu, COVID-19, shingles, RSV, whooping cough, and pneumonia

There is also growing evidence that vaccines may have extra benefits, such as helping to lower the risk of heart disease and possibly problems with memory and thinking, including dementia.

Benefits of Vaccination

Vaccines can help to:

- Reduce the risk of serious illness and needing to go to hospital
- Lower the chance of complications if you do get sick
- Stay independent and support healthy ageing
- Help protect your family and community by slowing the spread of infections

Getting vaccinated is a simple and effective way to stay healthy and well for longer.

Eligibility and Access Information

The information on the next page gives general advice for Australians aged 65 years and over. It may not suit everyone, especially some people with specific health conditions or individual care needs.

While these vaccines are recommended for older adults, not all of them are free under the Australian Government.

For vaccines that are not free, the prices listed are a guide only. Costs may vary between clinics and pharmacies, and you may also need to pay a GP consultation fee. If you have private health insurance, you may be able to claim some of the cost back.

If you are travelling overseas, speak with your GP about which vaccines you may need for your trip.

Vaccination Schedule and Key Features

Disease	Vaccine	First Nations People	Age 65-69	Age 70-74	Age 75 and older	How long protection lasts and other key points
Influenza	Fluad	Free	Free	Free	Free	Recommended each year
COVID	Comirnaty (Pfizer)	Free	Free	Free	Free	- Recommended each year - If you are aged 75 or older, it is recommended every 6 months
Shingles	Shingrix (2-dose course; second dose 1–6 months later)	Free	Free	Free	Free	- If you had the older shingles vaccine (Zostavax), you should have Shingrix 5 years after the last dose - After this, no further booster or extra doses are needed
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	Arexvy	Free	\$300	\$300	Free	Based on current evidence, booster doses are not recommended
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	Boostrix or Adacel (combined with diphtheria and tetanus)	<\$65	<\$65	<\$65	<\$65	- At age 65, you should have a booster if you have not had one in the last 10 years - After that, have a booster every 10 years
Pneumococcal (Pneumonia)	Capvaxive (PCV21)	Free	Free	Free	Free	If you have had an earlier version of this vaccine (Prevenar 13 or Pneumovax 23), wait 12 months before having this new pneumococcal vaccine