

PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH AFTER 50

Vaccines to consider alongside your annual flu vaccine

As we get older, our immune system becomes less effective at fighting infections. This means that some infections can be more serious and may lead to complications or hospitalisation.

When you attend for your flu vaccine, it is a good opportunity to check whether you are also protected against **pneumococcal disease and shingles**.

Pneumococcal vaccine – 65+ recommended

Pneumococcal bacteria can cause serious infections such as **pneumonia, meningitis and sepsis**.

The risk of serious pneumococcal infection increases with age, which is why vaccination is recommended for **everyone aged 65 years and over**.

For most people, **one pneumococcal vaccination** provides protection. If you are younger than 65 years, you may need to have 2 doses of the vaccine at least 5 years apart.

A €20 administration charge applies to patients aged 65–70 who do not hold a GP Visit Card or Medical Card. If you hold a valid GP visit card or Medical Card, the pneumococcal vaccine is free. Please check with reception today if you can avail.

If you are unsure whether you have previously received a pneumococcal vaccine, please let the nurse/reception know before vaccination.

Shingles vaccine – Shingrix – 50 + recommended

Shingles is caused by the reactivation of the chickenpox virus, which remains in the body after you have had chickenpox. As you age past 50, your immune system naturally slows down. It can no longer keep the sleeping virus under control. About one in three people will get shingles in their lifetime.

The risk of developing shingles increases with age. Shingles can cause a painful rash and, in some people, **long-lasting nerve pain** after the rash has cleared.

Shingrix vaccination is recommended for adults aged 50 years and over.

Two vaccinations are needed for the full course.

We can provide Shingrix privately.

Cost - €235 per vaccination

2 vaccinations required – total cost €470. (Including administration)

Shingrix is **not currently funded by the HSE**, so the cost is payable by the patient.

Our nurse or GP can advise you about the timing of your second vaccination.

When you attend for your flu vaccine

If you are aged 65 or over, please ask our nurse if you are due any of the following:

Flu vaccine

Annual protection against influenza.

Pneumococcal vaccine

Protection against serious pneumococcal infections. If you were vaccinated before age 65 for an at-risk condition, you may need **two doses** of the PPV23 vaccine spaced at least **5 years apart**.

Shingles vaccine (Shingrix)

Protection against shingles and its complications.

If you have previously had any of these vaccines, please let us know so we can check your vaccination history.

If you have any questions

Please speak to our nurse or your GP if you would like more information about these vaccines or whether they are suitable for you.

Do not get these vaccines if you have had an allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of the vaccine or to any ingredient in the vaccine. If you are feeling unwell, please wait until you're feeling better before having your vaccine.

Vaccination recommendations and funding arrangements may change. Your individual vaccination requirements may vary.