



# THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINES IN PEOPLE WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS)

If you have an autoimmune disease like multiple sclerosis (MS), vaccines are an essential tool to protect your health. You are at higher risk for severe illness and death from infections of vaccine-preventable diseases. Consider the immunizations below:

- COVID-19**  
COVID-19 vaccines are safe and very effective! The benefits of vaccination outweigh any possible risks. COVID-19 vaccines do not cause MS or MS relapse and can be given at the same time as other vaccines.
- Flu**  
Flu infection can be serious, even in healthy individuals. Adults over 65, pregnant people, infants, and those with preexisting medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness. Flu vaccination is recommended annually.
- Varicella (Chickenpox)**  
The varicella, or chickenpox, vaccine is recommended for people with MS who have never been infected with chickenpox. It is also recommended that people with MS get the varicella vaccine before starting certain medications with a specific waiting time in between.
- Shingles**  
People with MS who are over age 19 should get a shingles vaccine if they are on certain medications.
- Pneumonia**  
Pneumococcal, or pneumonia, vaccines are recommended for certain people with MS. This includes people with pulmonary function difficulties and those who use a wheel chair or are bedfast.
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)**  
HPV is an extremely common infection. Most infections will clear on their own without treatment. However, some can cause cancer years after infection. The HPV vaccine prevents 90% of these cancers.

*This is not an exhaustive list of all immunizations that may be necessary for you. It's important to speak with your healthcare provider prior to receiving any vaccination. Considerations may necessary if you take certain medications. People with MS should not get vaccines containing a live virus. Your healthcare provider is the best person to discuss vaccine-related questions with.*



# ADDITIONAL IMMUNIZATION RESOURCES

- **General Vaccine Resources**

- Immunize Colorado Website: <https://www.ImmunizeColorado.org>
- WHO: [https://www.who.int/health-topics/vaccines-and-immunization#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/vaccines-and-immunization#tab=tab_1)

- **Vaccine Information Specific to People with MS**

- National Multiple Sclerosis Society: <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Living-Well-With-MS/Diet-Exercise-Healthy-Behaviors/Vaccinations>
- Cleveland Clinic: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/departments/neurological/depts/multiple-sclerosis/ms-approaches/ms-vaccinations>
- Department of Veterans Affairs: [https://www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/complementary\\_and\\_alternative\\_medicine/Vaccines\\_and\\_Multiple\\_Sclerosis\\_A\\_Practical\\_Guide.asp](https://www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/complementary_and_alternative_medicine/Vaccines_and_Multiple_Sclerosis_A_Practical_Guide.asp)

- **COVID-19**

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>
- Immunize Colorado: <https://www.immunizecolorado.org/resources/fact-sheet-covid-19-vaccine-booster-or-additional-dose-which-do-i-need/>

- **Flu**

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/vaccines/flu-vaccine.html>
- Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4208.pdf>

- **Human papillomavirus (HPV)**

- Immunize Colorado: <https://www.immunizecolorado.org/families-communities/hpv-prevention/>
- Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4207.pdf>

- **Varicella (Chickenpox)**

- Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4202.pdf>
- Voices for Vaccines: <https://www.voicesforvaccines.org/fact-sheets/chickenpox-vaccine-fact-sheet/>

- **Shingles (Zoster)**

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/shingles/multimedia/index.html>
- Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4221.pdf>

- **Pneumococcal Disease**

- Texas Medical Association: <https://www.texmed.org/TalkPneumococcal/>
- Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4213.pdf>
- Voices for Vaccines: <https://www.voicesforvaccines.org/fact-sheets/pneumonia-vaccines/>