

ISDH Long Term Care
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In Today's Issue:

- Pneumococcal Vaccinations
- Fall Prevention Awareness

ACIP Recommends Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV13) for Adults 65 Years and Older

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) now recommends a dose of PCV13 (Prevnar 13®) in addition to the currently recommended PPSV23 (Pneumovax®) in persons 65 years and older. Those who have not previously received pneumococcal vaccine or whose vaccination history is unknown should receive a dose of PCV13 first, followed by a dose of PPSV23 6-12 months later. The two vaccines should not be co-administered. The minimum acceptable interval between PCV13 and PPSV23 is 8 weeks.

Adults aged ≥ 65 years who have previously received ≥ 1 dose of PPSV23 and who have not yet received PCV13 should receive a dose of PCV13 at least 1 year after receipt of their most recent PPSV23 dose. When an additional dose of PPSV23 is indicated, it should be given 6 -12 months after PCV13 and ≥ 5 years after the most recent dose of PPSV23.

ACIP recommendations remain unchanged for the routine use of PCV13 in adults aged ≥ 19 years with high risk conditions including:

- immunocompromising conditions
- functional or anatomic asplenia
- cerebrospinal fluid leak
- cochlear implants

These recommendations will be re-evaluated in 2018. The increasing effects of herd immunity may limit the usefulness of a universal recommendation in the future.

Reference:

Tomczyk, S., Bennett, N., Stoecker, C., Gierke, R., Moore, M., Whitney, C., Pilishvili, T. (2014). Use of 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine and 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine among adults ≥ 65 years: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 63(37), 822-825. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6337a4.htm>

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) website includes information and links related to pneumococcal infections. The site can be accessed at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/25443.htm>.

"STRONG TODAY, FALLS FREE TOMORROW"

The beginning of fall also marks the seventh annual National Falls Prevention Awareness. This year's theme, "*Strong Today, Falls Free Tomorrow*," strives to raise awareness of injuries due to falls and prevent falls in the elderly population. According to the National Council on Aging, last year's campaign reached more than 2 million people.

"Falls are one of the leading causes of fatal and non-fatal injuries in Indiana," said State Health Commissioner William VanNess, M.D. "Falls Prevention Awareness is a time to help make people aware of the dangers of falling."

In 2012, Hoosiers ages 65 years and older suffered 8,211 falls that resulted in hospitalizations and there were 328 fatalities due to falls. Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an Emergency Department for a fall-related injury. As one ages, the chances of falling and of being seriously injured in a fall increases. Hip fractures due to falls in older adults resulted in an additional 895 emergency room visits.

Five easy ways to prevent falls include:

- **Increase your physical activity.** Exercises like walking or swimming at least 15 minutes a day can help build muscle strength and improve balance, which can prevent falls. Exercise programs that increase strength and improve balance also help.
- **See your eye doctor once every year.** Age-related eye diseases, such as cataracts, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, can increase the risk of falling. Early detection is critical to minimizing the effects of these conditions.
- **Review your medications.** Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the medicines you are taking and whether they may cause drowsiness or dizziness.
- **Remove environmental hazards.** Search your home for anything that could cause falls, including poor lighting, loose rugs, slippery floors and unsteady furniture. Remove or modify these hazards.
- **Think, plan and slow down.** Many falls are caused by hurrying. Slow down and think through the task you are performing.

Thirty percent of adults age 65 and older who live in the community fall each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). That number increases to 50 percent for older adults who live in residential care facilities or nursing homes.

Indiana is part of the Falls Free© Coalition, which includes several states and national organizations, professional associations and federal agencies across the country dedicated to reducing fall-related injuries and deaths among older adults.

Falls are an important healthcare quality issue for nursing homes and present many care challenges. The next Indiana Healthcare Quality Leadership Conference will focus on prevention of falls. Save the date of March 10, 2015, for this conference.