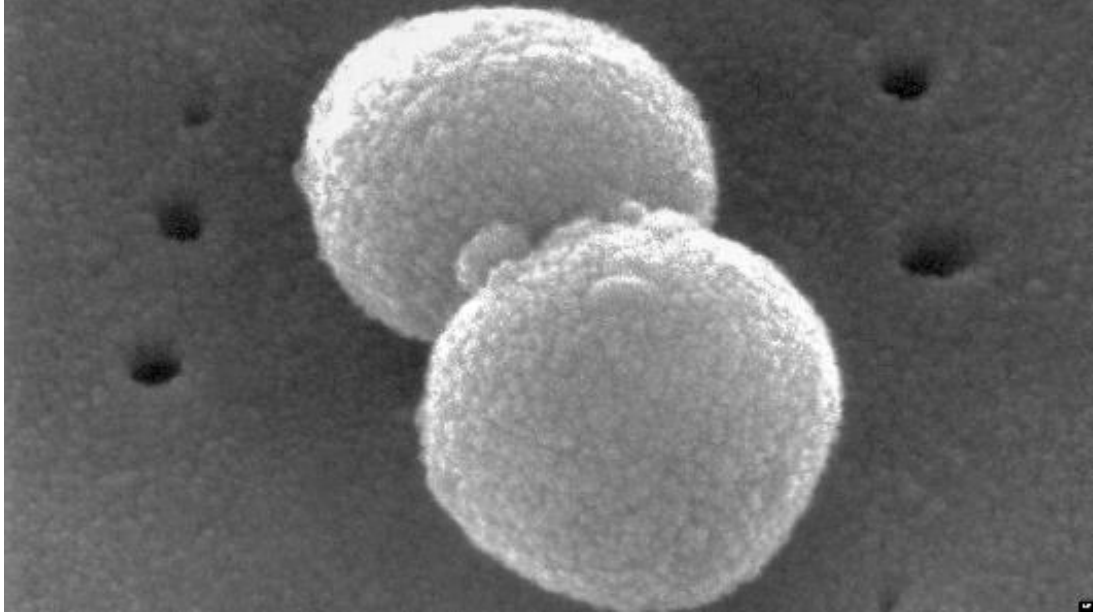


US Health Officials Call for Shots Against Pneumonia

冬が近づくと、体調を崩しやすい時期になりますよね。アメリカでは、肺炎などの呼吸器の病気から身を守るため、より多くの人に向けた新しい予防の方針が発表されました。重症化を防ぐには、早めの備えが大切だと考えられているようです。あなたの国では、季節の病気にどのように備えていますか？



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

American health officials say people age 50 and older should get [vaccinated](#) against [bacteria](#) that cause pneumonia and other dangerous diseases.

Pneumonia is an [infection](#) that affects the lungs. It makes breathing difficult and can cause a rise in body temperature. Pneumonia can also lead to a cough that produces yellow, green or bloody substances.

The advice, or recommendation, was offered by a group of scientific advisors and approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The former age recommendation for adult vaccinations was 65 and older.

CDC Director Mandy Cohen said in a statement, “Now is a great time to get vaccinated against pneumococcal disease in preparation for the winter respiratory season.”

The advisors voted 14-1 to change the age recommendation during an October meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, home of the CDC headquarters. Doctors widely follow the agency's guidance.

Pneumococcal shot recommendations are sometimes called the most complex vaccination guidance that the government issues.

The CDC currently recommends shots for children younger than five and adults 50 or older, as long as they have never been vaccinated against pneumococcal disease. Officials also recommend the shots for children and adults at increased risk for pneumococcal disease, such as those with diabetes, liver disease or a weakened immune, or defense, system.

There are more than 100 known kinds of pneumococcal bacteria. They can cause serious infections in the lungs and other parts of the body. Each year, the U.S. sees about 30,000 cases of pneumococcal disease, which includes blood infections, brain and spine inflammation, and other problems. About 30 percent of cases are among people aged 50 to 64.

The first pneumococcal vaccine was licensed in the U.S. in 1977. Since then, drugmakers have been coming up with newer versions that target several bacteria in a single shot.

There are four vaccines now in use. They include Prevnar 20 from Wyeth-Pfizer, and Vaxneuvance and Pneumovax 23 made by Merck. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration this year also [approved](#) Merck's Capvaxive, which can cost around \$300 a treatment. The new shot can protect against 21 kinds of bacteria, including eight not included in other pneumococcal vaccines. A Merck spokesperson said it is designed to help protect against the bacteria that cause the majority of [severe](#) disease in adults aged 50 and older.

In June, the CDC advisors recommended the vaccine as a possible shot for adults at higher risk. At the time, the group also talked about the possibility of lowering the age recommendation for older adults. They noted that infections causing sickness peak at age 55 to 59 among Black Americans — a lower age than found among white Americans.

Some scientists have concerns about the CDC recommendation. They say a second treatment, called a booster, may be necessary in about 15 years. And some new vaccines in development could force another update to the recommendations.

Dr. Jamie Loehr is the chair of the committee's pneumococcal working group. He was the only person to vote against the proposal.

He said, "Pneumococcal has been a very confusing recommendation for many, many years and it's hard to have a new recommendation every two or three years."

Hai Do adapted this story for VOA Learning English based on reporting from The Associated Press and information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. vaccinate (v.) to give a person or an animal a shot to protect against disease

You should vaccinate your pet dog against common diseases, such as rabies.

2. bacteria (n.) a tiny one-celled living thing

Some bacteria are important for producing food, such as kimchi or natto.

3. infection (n.) a sickness caused by a virus or bacteria

Wash a cut carefully with soap and water so that you do not get an infection.

4. approve (v.) to allow something; to say that something is OK or acceptable

The bank approved my application for a loan.

5. severe (adj.) very bad or extreme

Smoking can cause severe damage to your lungs.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is pneumonia?
2. According to the American CDC, who should get the pneumococcal vaccine?
3. How is Capvaxive different from other pneumococcal vaccines?
4. What vaccines do people often get in your country?
5. What things can you do to stop from getting the flu, pneumonia, or other illnesses that are common in winter?