

Recommended Vaccinations for Men Who Have Sex with Men

Gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men (MSM) should receive all recommended vaccines based on their age and health status. It's important to stay up-to-date on vaccinations to prevent illnesses caused by hepatitis A virus, hepatitis B virus, and meningococcal bacteria.

Do I need COVID-19 vaccines?

YES - Everyone 6 months and older should get a primary series of COVID-19 vaccine plus booster doses if and when eligible.

Do I need hepatitis A vaccines?

YES - MSM need this vaccine for protection against the hepatitis A virus, which can cause a serious liver infection that can be fatal. This vaccine is usually given in 2 doses, 6–18 months apart.

Hepatitis A and B vaccines can be given separately or in combination using the recommended schedule. To learn more, visit the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/populations/msm.htm>

Do I need hepatitis B vaccines?

YES - MSM are at risk for hepatitis B infection. If you haven't received any hepatitis B vaccinations, you need to get either a 2- or 3-dose series, depending on the brand.

Hepatitis A and B vaccines can be given separately or in combination using the recommended schedule. To learn more, visit the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/populations/msm.htm>

Do I need Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b) vaccines?

MAYBE - Some adults with certain high-risk conditions, like HIV or lack of a functioning spleen, should receive Hib vaccine. Talk to your healthcare provider to find out if you need this vaccine.

Do I need HPV (Human papillomavirus) vaccines?

YES - MSM are at an increased risk for HPV infection. You should be vaccinated against HPV if you are 26 years old or younger. Adults aged 27 through 45 may also be vaccinated after a discussion with their healthcare provider. The vaccine is usually given in 2 or 3 doses (depending on the age of the first dose) over 6 months; 3 doses are needed for people with a weakened immune system.

This handout has been adapted from Vaccinations for Men Who Have Sex with Men (immunize.org)

Do I need an influenza (flu) vaccination?

YES – You need to get the flu shot every year (preferably in the fall/winter) to protect yourself and those around you.

Do I need measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccines?

MAYBE – You need at least 1 dose of MMR vaccine if you were born in 1957 or later. You may also need a second dose. People with weakened immune systems should not get the MMR vaccine.

Do I need meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) vaccines?

MAYBE – You may need the MenACWY vaccine if you have certain health conditions, like HIV, and boosters may be needed.

You need MenACWY if you are age 21 or younger and a first-year college student living in a residence hall and you either have never been vaccinated or were vaccinated before age 16.

Due to a recent outbreak of meningitis in Florida, the CDC recommends that all gay and bisexual men who plan to travel to Florida discuss MenACWY vaccination with their healthcare provider.

Do I need meningococcal B (MenB) vaccines?

MAYBE – Certain groups are at an increased risk for meningococcal disease caused by serogroup B and should discuss vaccination with a healthcare provider. This includes college students and military recruits.

You may also need MenB vaccines if you have certain health conditions, for example, if you do not have a functioning spleen; boosters may be needed.

Do I need pneumococcal (PPSV23; PCV15; PCV20) vaccines?

MAYBE – If you are 65+ or have certain high-risk conditions, like HIV, then you may need pneumococcal vaccines. Talk to your healthcare provider to determine whether you need pneumococcal vaccination now.

Do I need a tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough (Tdap) vaccine?

YES – If you have not received a dose of Tdap during your lifetime, you need to get Tdap now. After that, you need a dose of Tdap or Td every 10 years.

Do I need varicella (chickenpox) vaccines?

MAYBE – If you've never had chickenpox, never were vaccinated, or only received one dose of chicken pox vaccine, talk to your healthcare provider to determine if you need this vaccine. People with a weakened immune system should not get the varicella vaccine.

Do I need zoster (shingles) vaccines?

MAYBE – If you're 50+, or if you are younger than 50 and immunocompromised (e.g. advanced HIV), you should get the Shingrix vaccine, even if you were already vaccinated with Zostavax. The vaccine is administered in 2 doses, 2-6 months apart.