

## Pneumovax 23™ (Pneu-C20) eligibility to expand effective August 1, 2025

The eligibility criteria for the provincially funded Pneumococcal 20-valent Conjugate (Pneu-C20) Vaccine immunization program in Alberta is expanding, starting August 1, 2025.

### 1. Policy update:

Effective August 1, 2025, the [Policy for Pharmacists Providing Pneumococcal Conjugate 20-Valent Vaccine](#) will be **retired**. It will be replaced by the:

- The [Pneumococcal Vaccine, 20-valent Conjugate \(Pneu-C20\)](#) - Pneumovax 23™ biological page.

Pharmacy providers should refer to this updated biological page for:

- Program scope for pharmacists providing provincially funded vaccine
- Eligibility criteria
- Program-specific guidance
- Vaccine spacing requirements

### 2. Expanded eligibility for Pneu-C20

Starting August 1, 2025, **one dose of Pneu-C20** will be provincially funded for individuals who meet the criteria below and have **not previously received Pneu-C20**, regardless of other prior pneumococcal vaccines.

- Adults **65 years of age** and older
- Adults **18 years of age and older** who belong to at-risk populations for invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD)
  - Refer to the [Populations at Increased Risk for Invasive Pneumococcal Disease \(IPD\)](#) section in the biological page for the full list of qualifying conditions and groups.

### 3. Program scope for pharmacists providing provincially funded vaccine:

Pharmacy providers may administer Pneu-C20 to eligible individuals **18 years of age and older**, excluding:

- Solid Organ Transplant (SOT) candidates and recipients
- Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy recipients
- Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (HSCT) recipients

**Referral required:** These individuals must be referred to **Primary Care Alberta (PCA) Public Health** (formerly AHS) for assessment and immunization.

**Exception:** Adult HSCT recipients may choose to purchase Pneu-C21 (Capvaxim™) as a fourth dose to broaden serotype coverage. This requires:

- Transplant specialist clearance
- A minimum of **six months** since their third pneumococcal dose
- Assessment by PCA Public Health.

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Note: Pharmacy providers may NOT administer provincially funded Pneu-C20 to any individuals under 18 years of age.

#### 4. Capvaxive™ (Pneu-C21) – not provincially funded

- Individuals (18+) who have received **Pneu-C20**, are considered **complete** for pneumococcal immunization.
- Those who have purchased **Pneu-C21** may still receive a provincially funded Pneu-C20 dose if they meet eligibility and have not previously received it.

#### 5. Vaccine spacing requirements

Ensure appropriate intervals between pneumococcal vaccines:

- **Adults aged 65+ without additional risk factors:**

- Wait a **minimum of one year** after receiving Pneu-C13, Pneu-C15, Pneu-C21 and/or Pneumo-P
  - » **Exception:** A minimum interval of at least **eight weeks** may be used if immunosuppressive therapy is imminent or if the person has a disease that may lead to immunodeficiency.

- **Adults 18 years+ with risk factors (including 65+):**

- Wait a **minimum of eight weeks** after Pneu-C13, Pneu-C15 or Pneu-C21 and
- Wait a **minimum of one year** after Pneumo-P
  - » **Exception:** A minimum interval of at least **eight weeks** may be used if immunosuppressive therapy is imminent or if the person has a disease that may lead to immunodeficiency.

#### 6. Vaccine ordering reminder

Pharmacies should order only the quantity needed for scheduled appointments. Primary and Preventative Health Services will monitor wastage and excess inventory, or wastage may result in suspension of vaccine ordering privileges.

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area)

403-294-4041 (Calgary and area)

1-800-361-9632 (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area)

FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefacts and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct-bill drug claims.

Visit [ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php](http://ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php)

