

Medicare Coverage of Vaccines

For reprint by the GWAAR Legal Services Team



Vaccines play an important role in preventing illness. However, knowing if and when Medicare pays for vaccines can be confusing. Most vaccines that your doctor recommends will be covered by your Medicare prescription drug plan. Medicare prescription drug plans are required to cover most commercially available vaccines. *The only exceptions are vaccines for flu, pneumonia, hepatitis B, and COVID-19, which are covered by Part B.*

Vaccine	Medicare Coverage	Coverage Rules
Influenza (flu)	Part B	Part B pays for (and recommends) one shot every flu season. Additional flu vaccines may be covered if considered medically necessary.
Pneumonia	Part B	Part B pays for one shot, recommended for all adults age 65+ and younger adults with chronic health conditions.
Hepatitis B	Part B	Part B covers the series of three shots for high- or medium-risk individuals, including those with hemophilia, end stage renal disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions that lower resistance to infection. (A prescription drug plan may cover the vaccine for someone who does not satisfy Part B coverage criteria. Contact your drug plan for more information.)
COVID-19	Part B	Part B covers FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines and the administration of the vaccines at no cost to beneficiaries if the provider accepts assignment.

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Vaccine	Medicare Coverage	Coverage Rules
Shingles	All Medicare prescription drug plans must cover	Two doses of Shingrix, separated by 2 to 6 months are recommended for healthy adults age 50 years and older. Check with your plan to find out specific rules for administration and payment.
RSV	All Medicare prescription drug plans must cover when available	One dose of Abrysyo or Arexxy is recommended for adults 60 years and older. Check with your plan to find out specific rules for administration and payment.
Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis/ Whooping Cough)	All Medicare prescription drug plans must cover	One dose Tdap followed by booster every 10 years for all adults. Check with your plan to find out specific rules for administration and payment.

Beginning in 2023, Medicare covers all recommended vaccines with no cost-sharing for beneficiaries. If you have Original Medicare, you will not pay any out-of-pocket costs for vaccines covered by Part B if your provider accepts assignment. Medicare Advantage plans are required to cover Part B vaccines without applying deductibles, copayments, or coinsurance if you meet the criteria for coverage and see an in-network provider. For vaccines covered by your Medicare prescription drug plan, check with your plan for information about how the plan covers vaccines and where you must receive the vaccine.