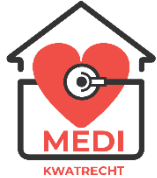


## Recommended vaccines for adults

This text is about (including newer) vaccines that you can request from your GP, in addition to classics such as the flu, the shot against diphtheria-whooping cough and Covid, about which there are other sources of information (for example <https://www.wanda.be/en/> including travel vaccines).



Most recent news is in red.

The vaccine against (1) tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough, (2) measles, mumps, and rubella, and (in the appropriate months and upon reservation) against Covid (3), is free and in stock at your GP's office. Any other vaccines you require can be purchased at the pharmacy with a prescription from your GP. You can also contact our nursing staff for the prescription and administration of the vaccine. Vaccines must be kept refrigerated.

### Flu (regular vaccine or high dose vaccine)

The regular flu vaccine is recommended for everyone with a chronic illness and also for everyone aged 60+. It can be bought in the pharmacy, from the age of 50 also without a prescription (also at the best price, under 50 only WITH a prescription). Brand names Influvac, Alfarix, Vaxigrip (17 euros, with reimbursement of 4 euros co-payment).

The high-dose vaccine is recommended for ages 65+ because in elderly fewer antibodies are produced (but necessary). It requires a prescription. Brand: Efluelda . It costs 40 eur in the Apotheek. Partially reimbursed at 75+ with prior application to health insurance (65+ for residents of institutions). The administration and prescription for the reimbursement are to be done by the GP or nurse.

The flu vaccine is recommended annually in or around November. The protective effect is not 100%, especially because unexpected variants of the flu can emerge.

### Covid

The annual, modified Comirnaty vaccine can be administered by a general practitioner by appointment (plus the number of people) in October and November. It is an mRNA vaccine adapted for the currently circulating variant (LP8.1 subvariant).

For those who do not want or cannot receive an mRNA vaccine, there is currently no alternative available.

Children aged 12 and older and adults: Comirnaty LP8.1 - 30 µg/dose dispersion for injection (Children under 11 who require it will receive the modified vaccine in pediatric referral centers).

### Tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough

This vaccine is best repeated every ten years. Deaths still occur every year from this three preventable diseases. Tetanus is often contracted through minor wounds from contact with animals or street dirt. Immunity against whooping cough is important when someone comes close to a newborn (gynecologists also urge this). If you have not had a vaccine for more than ten years, multiple vaccinations are needed to be up to par. The second shot is administered 1 to 6 weeks after the first, and the third shot follows 6 months to 1 year after the second (called the

"0-1-6" schedule, referring to the number of months after the start of the vaccination program in which it should be administered). The vaccine is free and readily available at your GP's office.

### **Pneumococcal (cause of many pneumonias): recommended from 50 years of age**

#### • First vaccination

o Preferred schedule for all target groups: 1 dose of Apexxnar (67 euros, limited to 12 euros between 65 and 80 years in the presence of chronic risks and provided a prescription states 'apply third party payer').

o Alternative schedule: 1 dose of Vacneuvrance (74 euros), followed by 1 dose of Prevenar 23 (33 euros) with an interval of at least 8 weeks in adults with an increased risk of pneumococcal infections and adults with co-morbidity, at least 1 year in healthy people between 65 and 85 years of age.

#### • Repeat vaccinations:

o adults with an increased risk of pneumococcal infections: 1 dose of Prevenar 23 (EUR 33) every 5 years.

### **Zona (Herpes Zoster)**

Zona is a late complication of chickenpox, often suffered by the patient decades earlier. Later in life, Zona can be very difficult and lead to months of discomfort, sometimes exhaustion due to pain and sometimes hospitalization.

Special zona vaccines are more expensive (Shingrix .163 euros) and have recently been recommended by the Supreme Health Council for everyone aged 60 and over.

### **RSV (= respiratory syncytial virus = serious lung diseases that often require hospitalization in children and the elderly).**

RSV infections often lead to hospital admission, sometimes fatally, in people over 60 years of age who also have a chronic illness (and/or are seriously overweight). The RSV vaccine is therefore strongly recommended for people over 60 with at least one risk factor for serious RSV disease. It is a single injection that works for at least three years, possibly longer (this is still under study).

In consideration of the seasonality of RSV, September and October are the preferred months for vaccination. **Since August 2025, it has been reimbursed for nursing home residents and for people over 65 with a chronic illness after a doctor's request to their health insurance fund.**

**Pregnant women are also reimbursed.**

**If you give birth during the RSV season, which runs from early October to late March, you can protect your baby against RSV by getting vaccinated between weeks 28 and 36 of your pregnancy. Reimbursement for these dates can be requested by your doctor (gynecologist or general practitioner; Abrysvo will be almost free instead of €185).**

**It protects the newborn for many months afterward against this serious lung disease. Vaccinating the mother provides the best protection for the newborn due to antibodies**

transferred from the mother; however, no vaccine can be reimbursed for the child after this period, nor is it necessary.

Other groups pay in the Apotheek:

**(Abrysvo, €185 or Arexvy, €206):** 1 injection, protects for at least 3 years, possibly longer (to be monitored in studies). *Recommended for people > 60 years.*

### **Meningococci (types A C W Y)**

Meningococci cause meningitis, a rare but serious disease. Vaccines exist separately for types A, C, W and Y and another vaccine against Meningococcus (type B).

- Meningococcal types A,C, W, Y (who got this free child)

Since 1/7/2023 included in the free vaccines for every child (highly recommended). Those who previously received the free basic vaccines in Flanders received a vaccine that only protected against Meningococcus type C.

- Meningococcus types A, C, W, Y (when traveling, 1 syringe)

Not necessary for every traveler. Can be given as a precaution: only once needed (at least 10 days before travel). Buy it yourself in a pharmacy (Nimenrix, €52) with a prescription from your GP, then have it done by your GP or their nurse.

### **Hepatitis A**

Hepatitis A is a flu-like illness with jaundice. It is the less serious form of viral hepatitis, but can be serious in people with severe chronic diseases, especially in the liver. It is also suggested for mental disability (with admission to a facility) and STD risk and travel outside Europe.

The vaccine is often requested in a two-in-1 syringe against hepatitis (= against A and B together) at a limited additional cost compared to the syringe against hepatitis A alone (which is almost never requested, unless in a case in the home or in the immediate vicinity, useful when given within 14 days of contact). Two syringes provide 25 years of protection, 1 syringe already provides 1 year of protection. Sometimes reimbursed for healthcare staff: see <https://www.fedris.be/nl/search/node/voordeel%20vaccines>.

Brands for Hepatitis A only (of your choice): Two injections, with an interval of 6 to 12 months (Havrix®, €30), 6 to 18 months (Vaqta® €45) or 6 to 36 months (Avaxim®, €43) .

### **Hepatitis B**

Hepatitis B is a severe jaundice that does not always cure. Transfer usually occurs through intimate contact or contaminated material (e.g. non-sterile syringes, needles or razor blades). Prevention is important in healthcare professions, in the case of serious chronic illness, those who have an infected loved one, some travel and sexual risk behavior. Reimbursement is possible at Fedris for work or internship in healthcare: <https://www.fedris.be/nl/search/node/voordeel%20vaccines>.

During a routine blood test at the GP, it is often checked upon request whether the vaccinated person (still) has enough antibodies: either before starting vaccination (a requirement when applying for reimbursement) and also 20 years after the vaccination.

Brand names (of your choice):

Engerix €28, Fendrix €51, HBvaxPro €23 (high dose, 40 mcg, for severe kidney disease: €63).

### **Simultaneous vaccination for Hepatitis A and B (two-in-one syringe)**

Like Hepatitis B vaccines, this vaccine must be given three times every six months (month “zero” = start and months 1 and 6). It usually provides protection for more than twenty years. This can be checked in blood samples. Brand name: Twinrix (51 euros).

### **Rabies (rabies).**

Useful for those who walk in remote nature and on some trips. Brand: Rabipur, 65 € in pharmacy. Two injections are required, with at least 7 days in between.

### **Tick-bite encephalitis (Früh Sommer Encephalitis, FSE)**

Useful for those who walk in remote nature and on some trips. The vaccine protects against this form of encephalitis. Tick saliva sometimes contains bacteria (the cause of Lyme disease, treatable with antibiotics) but also sometimes viruses, for which there is no treatment but a vaccine: FSME.

Vaccine: FSME, €39/syringe in pharmacy. Required: 2 injections with an interval of 1 to 3 months (or 14 days if there is insufficient time), followed by a third injection 5 to 12 months after the second injection. At least 2 injections before departure. Repeat (if necessary) after three years, then every five years, after 60 again every three years.

Simultaneous flu and COVID vaccination: permitted between October 15 and 31, 2025. The COVID vaccine is available in the practice upon reservation (plus the number of people). You must bring a flu shot from the pharmacy.

### **Measles**

Primarily advised for 30-40 year-olds and healthcare workers ( Free and in stock at your GP's office)

Young people are usually fully vaccinated as children. Older adults are immune because they have had the disease. However, 30-40 year-olds are often not (fully) vaccinated. Catch-up vaccination is strongly recommended for them. Why healthcare workers? As a healthcare worker, you come into contact with many people who can become very ill from measles. You also have a higher risk of coming into contact with someone who has measles. The free injection also contains the mumps and rubella vaccine.