



Winter is creeping closer and with it, the flu. Having flu can lead to anything from a light case of malaise (not feeling well) and light sinus symptoms like a runny nose, to serious complications like pneumonia and sinus infections. While it's easy to confuse the early stages of flu with a cold, the flu is a more serious viral illness. A cold usually gives you sniffles and affects your voice, while seasonal flu can quickly become serious. So why take the chance of getting sick when you can have a vaccine for protection instead?

Each year's flu shot protects you from this season's flu. The virus changes constantly so each year's flu shot protects against the strains that are most likely to be active that year.

At Bankmed, keeping you well is important to us, so we cover an annual vaccine for you and your dependants without you using your day-to-day benefits. Although, we do pay the Healthcare Professional who administers the vaccine from your day-to-day benefits. To save money, get your vaccination at a network pharmacy.

**You have the power to protect yourself against flu!**

## PROTECTION AGAINST PNEUMONIA AND OTHER PNEUMOCOCCAL INFECTIONS

Flu can be dangerous because some people can contract secondary infections after having flu. We can't protect against all kinds of bacteria, but a vaccine is available that can protect you from the pneumococcal bacteria. If you're young and healthy, your immune system can usually protect you from this type of bacteria, so you don't need an immunization.

However, if you're older than 60 years or have asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, cardiovascular disease (heart disease) or HIV/AIDS, we cover you for a pneumococcal vaccination every five years to give your immune system a boost. The pneumococcal vaccination protects against a range of infections including ear and sinus, pneumonia and bloodstream infections.

Vaccination spares you the unpleasantness of feeling poorly and prevents serious illness.

**Keep your vaccinations up to date.**

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