

ISLAMIC ASPECT OF VACCINATIONS FOR ADULTS

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Health is one of the most basic human rights and this principle is especially true in Islam. Health promotion, disease prevention, health maintenance, and treating illness (physical and mental) are the cornerstones of healthy living. Allah (SWT) placed the soul in the body on a temporary basis to dwell in this world for a short period with the sole purpose to worship Him. Allah (SWT) states in the Glorious Qur'an *I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me* Qur'an 51:56. It is therefore incumbent on humans to take care of the soul by our deeds and of the body by attention to physical and mental health. This brief article will focus on one aspect of disease prevention - vaccinations.

Some adults are under the mistaken impression that vaccinations are only for children, and others wrongfully believe that vaccinations are harmful. Almost all forms of medical treatment have some unwanted side effect, but the benefits greatly outweigh the adverse effects. Vaccinations do prevent diseases. If one becomes sick from a preventable disease, then he/she may not be able to work or could place hardship on family members or the community as a whole. Science has clearly shown that vaccines are extremely beneficial to mankind. Allah (SWT) states in the Glorious Qur'an *"O you who have attained to faith! Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle and those from among you who have been entrusted with authority..." (Qur'an 4:59)* Therefore, we are obligated to follow the orders of Allah (SWT) and those of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH). We also should follow directives from those place in authority over us the medical experts in this case. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (OWBP) said: *"If you hear of an outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; but if the plague breaks out in a place while you are in it, do not leave that place."* By analogy, this is disease prevention.

Regarding vaccines, it is worthwhile to understand that some people may require more vaccinations than others because of certain medical conditions, and others may not be able to take some vaccinations for various reasons including allergy. Therefore **each person must consult with his/her personal physician prior to taking any vaccine.**

Adults need vaccinations for several reasons, even if they had all the required childhood vaccinations. These include:

1. Immigrants to the United States, especially the elderly immigrants, may not have had the childhood vaccinations in their homeland

2. Some vaccines are only for adults, and therefore there would not have been administered during childhood
3. Immunity from childhood vaccinations can wear off with time, and additional vaccinations during adulthood become necessary
4. Vaccines have changed over the years with the newer ones offering more protection
5. Viruses do change over time. For example, influenza
6. Some vaccines must be individualized based on one's personal medical history, occupation, and travel plans or requirements.

SUMMARY OF VACCINATIONS FOR ADULTS

The following is extracted from the website for the Center for Disease Control. These are general guidelines and all of these may not apply to everyone.

Consult your personal health care provider before taking any vaccination.

VACCINE	SCHEDULE
Flu (Flu)	Flu inactivated (IIV) or Influenza recombinant (RIV) one dose annually
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis	one dose Tdap, then Td or Tdap booster every 10 years
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)	one or 2 doses depending on the indication (born in 1957 or later)
Varicella (VAR)	one dose
Zoster recombinant (ZV) (preferred) OR	two doses OR
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Zoster live (ZVL)	one dose
Human papillomavirus (HPV)	not recommended for those over age 45 years
Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV13)	PCV13 for all children younger than 2 years old and people age 65 years and older with certain health conditions. In addition, younger adults may discuss and decide, with their vaccine provider, whether to receive PCV13. one dose
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Pneumococcal polysaccharide (PSV23)	PSV23 for older adults, people age 65 and older with certain health conditions, and adults who smoke cigarettes one dose for those over age 65 years

hepatitis A (HepA)	or 3 doses depending on vaccine - the provider will decide
hepatitis B (HepB)	or 3 doses depending on vaccine - the provider will decide
meningococcal A, C, W, Y (MenACWY)	or 2 doses depending on the indication, see notes for booster recommendations

The cost for several vaccinations are covered by Medicare Part B and Medicare Part D. There may be some out-of-pocket charges for some vaccines.

For more details access the following website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>