



Vaccination information  
for Natives by Natives

# Six Vital Vaccines for Elders



**Vaccines are especially important for Elders.** As we get older, our immune system weakens. This makes it harder to fight off infections, like flu and shingles. As a result, Elders are more likely to get sick and have more serious illness. Thankfully, vaccines can help protect us, so we can stay healthy as we age.

This handout is about six vital vaccines for Elders to consider and why.



“ I want people to get vaccinated. Doing so allows everyone to be healthier. In a traditional sense, it is our responsibility to take care of ourselves and each other by getting vaccinated. ”

– Gretchen LaDue, Elder and Cowlitz Tribal Member

	Importance	When to Get Vaccine
<b>Influenza (Flu)</b> <b>RSV</b> <b>COVID-19</b>	Common illnesses that affect our nose, throat, lungs and breathing passages that can be severe or even deadly for Elders.	Get in the early Fall though Spring AND Get Yearly.
<b>Pneumonia</b>	Potentially serious infection caused by a bacteria or virus in the lungs.	Get after you turn 65 years old.
<b>Shingles</b>	Keeps you safe from shingles – which can cause a painful blistering rash on one side of the body.  Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chicken pox.	Starting at age 50 and older.  If you haven't had chicken pox yet, also consider getting vaccinated against chicken pox.
<b>Tdap Booster</b>	Protects against 3 common infections that can damage your nerves and organs, like your heart and lungs.	Get if you haven't received a tetanus shot in the last 10 years, or if you only had the tetanus & diphtheria vaccine.

For more information on symptoms, visit [www.IndianCountryECHO.org/Vaccinative](http://www.IndianCountryECHO.org/Vaccinative) and [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov).

## You may need other vaccines, too...

You may need other vaccines based on your health status and other factors. Talk with your health provider to learn which vaccines are best for you. Also ask them about getting multiple vaccines at once. This can cut down on clinic visits!

## How Sickness Spreads



Someone who is sick coughs or sneezes, and you breathe in the droplets.



You touch a surface with droplets on it, then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.



You have close contact, like kissing, with someone who is sick.

## Prevent Spreading Sickness By



Washing your hands regularly.



Not touching your face before washing your hands.



Avoiding close contact with others.  
(Ex: kissing, shaking hands, sharing eating utensils)



Getting vaccinated.

### VacciNative

This handout was developed by VacciNative – a project dedicated to creating accurate vaccine information for Native people by Native people. We do this by gathering info from trusted Elders, Native health professionals, and other experts. All of our materials are reviewed by the VacciNative Alliance, a collaboration of staff from Tribal Epidemiology Centers across the nation.

### Additional Information

For additional information, check out [www.IndianCountryECHO.org/VacciNative](http://www.IndianCountryECHO.org/VacciNative). For questions, contact us at [VacciNative@npaihb.org](mailto:VacciNative@npaihb.org).

### Protecting Yourself and Your Community

Consider elbow or forearm tapping instead of shaking hands, bringing hand sanitizer when you're on the go, and wearing a mask if you attend large gatherings.