

Information for Healthcare Professionals about the Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Vaccines for Adults

Read the information below for help interpreting answers to the screening checklist. To learn even more, consult the references in **Note** below.

NOTE: For supporting documentation on the answers given below, see CDC's "Adult Immunization Schedule" (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html) that shows intervals between doses and "General Best Practice Guidelines: Contraindications and Precautions" (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/general-recs/contraindications.html). This checklist does not include COVID-19-specific vaccination screening questions. For this, see www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/pre-vaccination-screening-form.pdf.

1. Are you sick today? [all vaccines]

There is no evidence that acute illness reduces vaccine efficacy or safety. However, as a precaution, all vaccines should be delayed until moderate or severe acute illness has improved. Mild illnesses with or without fever (e.g., otitis media, "colds," diarrhea) and antibiotic use are not contraindications to routine vaccination.

2. Do you have allergies to medications, food, a vaccine ingredient, or latex? [all vaccines]

Gelatin: If a person has anaphylaxis after eating gelatin, do not give vaccines containing gelatin. **Eggs:** In June 2023, based upon a systematic review of current vaccine safety data, ACIP and CDC recommended that people with any type of egg allergy may receive any influenza vaccine (egg-based or non-egg-based) that is otherwise appropriate for their age and health status. **Latex:** An anaphylactic reaction to latex is a contraindication to vaccines with latex as part of the vaccine's packaging (e.g., vial stoppers, prefilled syringe plungers, prefilled syringe caps). For details on latex in vaccine packaging, refer to the package insert (listed at www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines/vaccines-licensed-use-united-states). An **injection-site reaction** (e.g., soreness, redness, delayed-type local reaction) to a prior dose or vaccine component, including latex, is not a contraindication to a subsequent dose or vaccine containing that component.

3. Have you ever had a serious reaction after receiving a vaccine? [all vaccines]

- Anaphylaxis to a previous vaccine dose or vaccine component is a contraindication for subsequent doses of the vaccine or vaccine component. (See question 2.)
- Usually, one defers vaccination when a precaution is present unless the benefit outweighs the risk (e.g., during an outbreak).

4. Do you have any of the following: a long-term health problem with heart, lung, kidney, or metabolic disease (e.g., diabetes), asthma, a blood disorder, no spleen, a cochlear implant, or a spinal fluid leak? Are you on long-term aspirin therapy? [MMR, VAR, LAIV]

LAIV is not recommended for people with anatomic or functional asplenia, a cochlear implant, or cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) leak; give **IIV** or **RIV** instead. Underlying health conditions that increase the risk of influenza complications such as heart, lung, kidney, or metabolic disease (e.g., diabetes) and asthma are precautions for **LAIV**. **MMR:** A history of thrombocytopenia or thrombocytopenic purpura is a precaution to **MMR**. **VAR:** Aspirin use is a precaution to **VAR** due to the association of aspirin use, wild type varicella infection, and Reye syndrome in children and adolescents.

5. Do you have cancer, leukemia, HIV/AIDS, or any other immune system problem? [LAIV, MMR, VAR]

Live virus vaccines such as those listed above are usually contraindicated in immunocompromised people, with exceptions. For example, **MMR** vaccine is recommended and **VAR** may be considered for adults with CD4+ T-lymphocyte counts of greater than or equal to 200 cells/mL. Immunosuppressed people should **not** receive **LAIV**; give **IIV** or **RIV** instead. See "General Best Practice Guidelines: Altered Immunocompetence" at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/general-recs/immunocompetence.html.

6. Do you have a parent, brother, or sister with an immune system problem? [MMR, VAR]

MMR or **VAR** vaccines should not be administered to a patient with a family history of congenital or hereditary immunodeficiency in first-degree relatives (e.g., parents, siblings) unless the patient's immune competence has been clinically substantiated or verified by a laboratory.

7. In the past 6 months, have you taken medicines that affect your immune system, such as prednisone, other steroids, or anticancer drugs; drugs for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, or psoriasis; or have you had radiation treatments? [LAIV, MMR, VAR]

Live virus vaccines such as those listed above should be postponed until chemotherapy or long-term high-dose steroid therapy concludes. See **Note**. Some immune mediator and modulator drugs (especially the anti-tumor necrosis factor [TNF] agents adalimumab, infliximab, etanercept, golimumab, and certolizumab pegol) may be immunosuppressive. Avoid live virus vaccines in people taking immunosuppressive drugs. A list of such drugs appears in CDC's Yellow Book at www.wnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2024/additional-considerations/immunocompromised-travelers. To find specific vaccination schedules for hematopoietic stem cell transplant patients, see "General Best Practice Guidelines: Altered Immunocompetence" at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/general-recs/immunocompetence.html.

8. Have you had a seizure or a brain or other nervous system problem? [influenza, Td/Tdap]

Tdap: Tdap is contraindicated in people who have a history of encephalopathy within 7 days following DTP/DTaP. An unstable progressive neurologic problem is a precaution to using Tdap. For people with stable neurologic disorders (including seizures) unrelated to vaccination, or for people with a family history of seizure, vaccinate as usual. **A history of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS):** 1) Td/Tdap: GBS within 6 weeks of a tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine is a precaution; if the decision is made to vaccinate, give Tdap instead of Td; 2) all influenza vaccines: GBS within 6 weeks of an influenza vaccine is a precaution; influenza vaccination should generally be avoided unless the benefits outweigh the risks (e.g., for those at higher risk for influenza complications).

9. In the past year, have you received immune (gamma) globulin, blood/blood products or an antiviral drug? [MMR, VAR]

See current ACIP recommendations (**Notes** above) for recommended intervals between receipt of live virus vaccines such as those listed above and certain blood/blood products, immune (gamma) globulin, or an antiviral drug.

10. Are you pregnant? [HPV, HepB, IPV, LAIV, MenB, MMR, VAR]

Live virus vaccines (e.g., **LAIV**, **MMR**, **VAR**) are contraindicated during pregnancy because of the theoretical risk of virus transmission to the fetus. Sexually active people who could become pregnant and who receive a live virus vaccine should be instructed to avoid pregnancy for 1 month following vaccination. **IPV** and **MenB** should not be given except to those with an elevated risk of exposure during pregnancy. Two brands of **HepB** (HepLisav-B and PreHevbrion) are not recommended during pregnancy due to a lack of available safety data during pregnancy; pregnant people needing protection should receive Engerix-B or Recombivax-HB: both are known to be safe during pregnancy. **HPV** vaccine is not recommended during pregnancy. **Injectable influenza vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine, and Tdap** are explicitly recommended during pregnancy.

11. Have you received any vaccinations in the past 4 weeks? [LAIV, MMR, VAR, yellow fever]

People given live virus vaccines, such as those listed above, should wait 28 days before receiving another live virus vaccine (wait 30 days for yellow fever vaccine). Inactivated vaccines may be given at the same time or at any spacing interval.

12. Have you ever felt dizzy or faint before, during, or after a shot?

Fainting (syncope) or dizziness (presyncope) is **not** a contraindication or precaution to vaccination. However, for some people these can be a response to vaccination anxiety. People in adolescent and young adult age groups are more likely to experience syncope. CDC recommends that vaccine providers consider observing all patients for 15 minutes after vaccination. This is especially important for people with a pattern of injection-related syncope. For more information about vaccination-related syncope, see www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4260.pdf.

13. Are you anxious about getting a shot today?

Anxiety can lead to vaccine hesitancy or avoidance. Simple steps can help a patient's anxiety about vaccination. Visit www.immunize.org's "Addressing Vaccination Anxiety" clinical resources at www.immunize.org/handouts.

VACCINE ABBREVIATIONS

HepB = Hepatitis B vaccine
HPV = Human papillomavirus vaccine
IIV = Inactivated influenza vaccine
cIIV = Cell culture inactivated influenza vaccine

IPV = Inactivated poliovirus vaccine
LAIV = Live attenuated influenza vaccine
MenB = Meningococcal B vaccine
MMR = Measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine

RIV = Recombinant influenza vaccine
Td/Tdap = Tetanus, diphtheria, (acellular pertussis) vaccine
VAR = Varicella vaccine