

Here are this week's health care news highlights from AskaPatient:

- This new steroid could provide the same benefits as prednisone without the long-term side effects. <http://ow.ly/ojwA30IWc3h> (09-24-18)
- Scientists are closing in on a design for creating a universal flu vaccine. <http://ow.ly/f3az30IWccY> (09-24-18) *additional information at bottom of newsletter.**
- Rare preventable eye infection sees a recent three-fold increase, likely due to poor contact lense hygiene. <http://ow.ly/N9fM30IWcmr> (09-24-18)
- Breaking a bone anywhere decreases density in all bones, leading to more breaks. <http://ow.ly/ZfmH30IXiqg> (09-25-18)
- H. pylori already has a strong link with stomach ulcers, but could the bacterium also be causing Parkinson's disease? <http://ow.ly/9uPw30IXis0> (09-25-18)
- Even short bouts of light exercise can impart significant improvements in memory. <http://ow.ly/NGjL30IXisF> (09-25-18)
- Epidural stimulator along with daily therapy allows people with complete spinal cord injuries to stand and even walk again. <http://ow.ly/TFBW30IYbEI> (09-26-18)
- Experts warn that obesity could overtake smoking as the biggest cause of cancer in UK women in the next 25 years. <http://ow.ly/Gsxa30IYbTn> (09-26-18)
- Babies born with syphilis reaches a 20-year high, doubling in the last 4 years. <http://ow.ly/EJxr30IYc1P> (09-26-18)
- Veteran suicide rate continues to rise, and sees a ten percent jump among younger veterans. <http://ow.ly/1u7p30IZqJK> (09-27-18)
- Heart attack survivors have a higher risk of sudden death, but many will not wear defibrillator vests even though it could save their lives. <http://ow.ly/oKdd30IZqPd> (09-27-18)
- A tiny, multi-legged robot may one day be used to deliver drugs to specific places inside the body. <http://ow.ly/Zw9Q30IZr0r> (09-27-18)
- Combination therapy for HIV with a new treatment may eventually allow patients to create their own antibodies against the virus. <http://ow.ly/vFqi30m0jRC> (09-28-18)
- Smartphone system can detect lead in drinking water using an inexpensive lens. <http://ow.ly/ftCy30m0jWq> (09-28-18)
- Scientists develop a medication that renders gluten molecules harmless for people with celiac disease. <http://ow.ly/PJfs30m0kb1> (09-28-18)
- French study finds evidence that secondhand smoke can increase risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis. <http://ow.ly/P3yi30m1tEm> (09-29-18)
- The bacteria living in our noses may influence the severity of cold symptoms. <http://ow.ly/790l30m1tEI> (09-29-18)

From AskaPatient: Warding off influenza, pneumonia, meningitis, and shingles

Last year, more than **30 million people** in the U.S. became sick with the flu. Typically, there are between 9 and 35 million cases of flu a year, so last year was an especially severe season. The Center for Disease Control encourages everyone over the age of 6 months to get a flu shot. High-risk groups, including people over the age of 65, may consider getting one of the higher strength flu vaccinations such as the high-dose or the adjuvanted version. Check out last week's [newsletter](#) for a re-cap of the vaccination options.

Pneumococcal disease is another category of common but potentially serious and debilitating illnesses for seniors. Here is a list along with the vaccines that may prevent them: (Links go to rating forms. Please consider adding a review for your experience with the vaccine.).

Pneumococcal Diseases	Number of Cases in U.S. Per Year
Pneumococcal pneumonia	1,000,000
Pneumococcal (bacterial) meningitis	4,000

Vaccines to prevent*	Initial Approval Year in U.S.
Pneumovax (pneumococcal vaccine polyvalent)	1983
Pneumovax 23 (pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine)	1983
Prevnar 13 (pneumococcal 13-valent Conjugate Vaccine)	2010

[Pneumovax 23 \(pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine\)](#)

1983

[Prevnar 13 \(pneumococcal 13-valent Conjugate Vaccine\)](#)

2010

*Both vaccines are recommended for seniors age 65 and over (one-time), with Prevnar 13 preferably taken first followed by Pneumovax a year or more later.

Along with flu and pneumococcal vaccines, there is a third category of vaccine recommended for seniors: the shingles vaccine, [Shingrix](#), which is reported to be 90% effective in preventing outbreaks of herpes zoster.

The CDC says that one in three adults will develop shingles at least once during their lifetime. There are an estimated one million cases of shingles diagnosed each year in the U.S. In 2016, one-third of adults 60 years and older reported receiving Zostavax, a shingles vaccine in use since 2006. CDC has not yet released data for the Shingrix vaccine, which was approved by the FDA in 2017 and is recommended for adults age 50 and over.

Sources and More Reading:

- Why vaccinate adults against [pneumococcal?](#)
- Shingles facts and myths from [Cleveland Clinic](#)
- Data and CDC Reports: [Sepsis](#)

- *From a *Mathematical model to a universal flu vaccine*. "Why do we have perfectly good vaccines against some diseases like measles and not others? Why do vaccines against diseases like influenza require constant updating while others have remained the same for decades?" Read the [blog](#) written by the researcher "behind the paper."

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