

## Vaccines and Chronic Disease: What Patients Need to Know

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This fact sheet explains why vaccines are especially important for people living with chronic disease and how vaccination can reduce the risk of serious complications.

### Why This Matters to Patients

People living with chronic disease often experience more severe outcomes from preventable infections.

Vaccination is a key tool for protecting health, maintaining independence, and avoiding complications.

### Chronic Disease and Infection Risk

Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, cancer, autoimmune conditions, and kidney disease can increase the risk of severe illness from infections.

### Vaccines and the Immune System

Some chronic conditions, or treatments used to manage them, can weaken the immune system. Vaccines help prepare the immune system to respond more effectively to infections.

### Safety and Timing

Most vaccines are safe for people with chronic illness, but timing and vaccine type may matter. A health care provider can help determine the safest approach based on individual health needs.

### Talking to Your Health Care Provider About Vaccines

People living with chronic disease may have questions about which vaccines are recommended, the timing of vaccination, and how vaccines fit alongside ongoing treatment. A health care provider can help patients understand which vaccines are appropriate for their condition, discuss timing considerations, and address any precautions related to their care. These conversations support informed, personalized vaccination decisions that align with a patient's overall health plan.

Developed by the Health Coalition of Alberta to support patient education, informed decision-making, and equitable access to vaccines in Alberta. Program details and eligibility may change; patients are encouraged to confirm current information with a health care provider or public health clinic.