

Medicare Beneficiaries Skipping Recommended Immunizations

According to federal officials, Americans over 60 are often not getting needed vaccinations, and this presents a growing problem in our healthcare system. About 65% of people 65 and older have never had their shingle vaccines. 40% have not had a tetanus shot in the past 10 years; and nearly 33% have not had the pneumonia vaccine.

Because these immunizations are skipped, the healthcare costs are driven up by 4.8 billion a year according to research estimates. The most neglected of these vaccines, the shingles vaccine, reduces the risk of getting shingles. Shingles can cause painful and blistered skin, fever, headache, fatigue, and sensitivity to light. This vaccine is recommended for adults 60 and older, if not immune suppressed.

Most adults over 60 should get the flu shot annually, a tetanus booster every 10 years, a shingles shot once, and a pneumonia vaccine every 10 years.