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Is 50 Really the New 30? Your Immune System May Not Think So

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Actor Tim Daly in partnership with the American Lung Association and Pfizer launches the WHO PNEU?™ Campaign – Urging adults 50 and older to know their Pneumococcal pneumonia risk

The American Lung Association in partnership with Pfizer announces the launch of**WHO PNEU?™**, a public awareness campaign encouraging Baby Boomers and older Gen X-ers to recognize their personal risk for pneumococcal pneumonia — a serious lung disease1 that can be spread by coughing and sneezing.2 An estimated quarter of a million US adults over 50 are hospitalized each year with pneumococcal pneumonia.3,4

On behalf of Pfizer and the American Lung Association, Harris Poll conducted a telephone survey of 1000 U.S. adults aged 50 to 75. Findings from this survey showed that 85 percent of respondents think people 50 and older are at risk for pneumococcal pneumonia, but only 1 in 2 (50 percent) agree they are personally at risk.5

“While many of us over 50 may act and feel younger, the truth is our immune system naturally weakens with age, putting us at increased risk for infectious diseases. With **WHO PNEU?**, we are providing a wake-up call for these adults to talk to their doctors and see if they are up to date on their vaccinations,” said Harold P. Wimmer, National President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Lung Association.

Starting this fall, **WHO PNEU?** will roll out a national PSA (public service announcement) campaign on television, radio and print, featuring actor, director, producer and philanthropist Tim Daly.

“Some people think you have to be elderly and in the hospital to get pneumococcal pneumonia, but that’s not so,” said Freda Lewis-Hall, MD, Chief Medical Officer of Pfizer. “Anyone can get pneumococcal pneumonia anywhere and at any time, and the risk increases after we turn 50.6 It’s also important to understand that pneumococcal pneumonia can be a really serious condition and shouldn’t be taken lightly.”

Daly, 59, who currently stars as Henry McCord in the CBS hit series *Madam Secretary,* and is well known for his lead TV roles in *The Sopranos*, *Private Practice* and *Wings*, knows firsthand about the risk of pneumococcal pneumonia. His mom was hospitalized with the disease for over a week in 1991.

“At first, my mom thought she had a bad cold, but the second I saw her I knew something was seriously wrong. She looked horrible. She was very weak and pale, and struggling to breathe,” said Daly, recounting the day he visited his mom and then decided to drive her straight to the hospital emergency room. “The experience with my mom really scared me because she got really sick.”

Now in his 50s, Tim is more cognizant of his health. By joining forces with **WHO PNEU?** he hopes to drive greater awareness of personal risk for pneumococcal pneumonia among his peers, beginning with a preview of the campaign survey results that offer a glimpse into what adults 50 to 75 are thinking about the disease, such as:

- Only about half of adults 50 to 75 (53%) surveyed understand that pneumococcal pneumonia does not only affect the very young and elderly. In fact, anyone can get pneumococcal pneumonia anywhere and at any time, and the risk increases as they get older.5
- Survey results showed that a majority of respondents know the following is true about pneumococcal pneumonia:
    - 85 percent and 91 percent of respondents recognize that vaccination and hand washing, respectively, can help reduce the risk of getting pneumococcal pneumonia.5

- The survey results also suggest a misperception among respondents when it comes to ways to reduce the risk of getting pneumococcal pneumonia.
    - For instance, 36 percent think wearing layers can help to reduce the risk of pneumococcal pneumonia.5
    - And, a quarter (25 percent) think holding their breath when someone coughs or sneezes around them can help reduce risk.5

Adults over 50 can visit **WhoPneu.com** to take a personal risk assessment for pneumococcal pneumonia, learn more about the disease, view the video PSA and hear more of Tim's personal story.

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About Pneumococcal Pneumonia

The most common form of bacterial pneumonia, pneumococcal pneumonia is a serious lung1 disease caused by the*Streptococcus pneumoniae* bacteria and is often spread through coughing or sneezing, and close contact with an infected person.2 Common symptoms may include difficulty breathing, excessive sweating, and high fever with shaking and chills, a productive (mucus) cough that persists or gets worse, and chest pain.1

About the WHO PNEU? Campaign and Survey

The American Lung Association in partnership with Pfizer developed the **WHO PNEU?** campaign to educate adults 50 and older about their risk for pneumococcal pneumonia, a serious lung disease.2 The campaign's mission is to raise awareness about personal risk for pneumococcal pneumonia and encourage adults 50 and older to check with their doctors to see if they are up to date on their vaccinations.

A national survey was conducted via telephone in the US by Harris Poll on behalf of the American Lung Association and Pfizer between June 22 and July 8, 2015. The research was conducted among 1000 adults aged 50 to 75. Results were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with the actual proportion of the population.

About the American Lung Association

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: Lung.org.

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For multimedia content associated with this release, please visit: http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20150930005458/en/50-30-Immune-System#.Vg1we_m6deg

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