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Guidelines for Incomplete Immunization Histories

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Dear VFA Provider,

We all know that incomplete immunization histories are a common barrier to assessing patients for needed vaccines. Patients may be [missing records](#) due to moving, changing health care providers and other reasons.

During these circumstances, CDC's [General Best Practice Guidelines](#) state that **“adults should receive a vaccine if the dose is recommended and no record of previous administration exists.”** Two **exceptions** are the following:

1. A patient [remembers being vaccinated](#) with influenza or pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccines; this should be accepted as evidence of vaccination. However, if a patient cannot remember receiving a vaccine and no record is available, proceed with administering the vaccine.
2. If a patient has a record of military service and does not have immunization records available, providers can assume that she/he has received all vaccines recommended by the military at the time of service entry.