

Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td) Vaccine

Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.

- **Vaccines make your immune system stronger. They build antibodies to help prevent diseases.**
- **Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get these diseases.**

What is the Td vaccine?

The Td vaccine protects against tetanus and diphtheria.

Who should have the Td vaccine?

This vaccine is given to adults if they cannot have the diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (dTdap) vaccine.

Talk to your healthcare provider if you cannot have a dtap vaccine and you:

- are not up to date with your tetanus and diphtheria immunizations
- are due for an extra (booster) dose
- cut or poke yourself with something dirty

Let your healthcare provider know if you were not immunized as a baby or are pregnant. You may need more than just the Td vaccine.

How many doses do I need?

If you are up to date with your tetanus and diphtheria immunizations, you need a booster of Td every 10 years. This is important to keep you protected against tetanus and diphtheria.

Are there other vaccines that protect against tetanus and diphtheria?

Yes, the diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (dTdap) vaccine protects against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough). You get this vaccine in Grade 9. You should also get a booster dose of dtap vaccine every 10 years and each time you are pregnant.

In most cases, adults will get a dtap vaccine (not the Td vaccine) to protect them against tetanus and diphtheria.

How well does the vaccine work?

If you get all of the recommended doses (primary series and booster dose), the protection for diphtheria and tetanus is almost 100%.

It is important to get booster doses for tetanus and diphtheria because this protection may weaken over time.

Where can I get the Td vaccine?

You can get the vaccine at a public health office in your area.

Are there side effects from the Td vaccine?

There can be side effects from the Td vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- redness, swelling, or feeling sore where you had the needle
- feeling tired
- sore or swollen joints
- fever or chills

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with fever or pain. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what medicine or dosage to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Children under the age of 18 years should **not** take aspirin because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weak immune system, must call their doctor if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

Who should not have the Td vaccine?

You may not be able to have the vaccine if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the vaccine
- had a severe or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it

Check with your doctor or public health nurse before you get the vaccine.

You can still have the vaccine if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever. Always tell your healthcare provider if you have allergies or if you have had a side effect from a vaccine in the past.

For More Information



Call Health Link at **811**



Go to [ImmunizeAlberta.ca](https://www.immunizealberta.ca)



Go to [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://www.myhealth.alberta.ca)

Facts about tetanus and diphtheria

What is tetanus?

Tetanus is a bacterial infection that causes uncontrolled movements (spasms) in the muscles of the jaw and other muscles of the body. Tetanus bacteria are common in dirt, manure (animal stool), and human stool. They can get into the body through a cut on the skin or an animal bite.

Tetanus can cause:

- a condition called lock jaw where the mouth stays closed and cannot open widely
- trouble breathing, seizures, and death

Getting tetanus is rare because there has been a vaccine since the 1940s. Most people have been immunized against it.

What is diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a nose and throat infection caused by bacteria. It is spread by coughing, sneezing, or close contact with an infected person. It can cause trouble breathing or swallowing, heart failure, and paralysis. One out of 10 people who get diphtheria will die.