Tetanus Immune Globulin (TIG)

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

- Immune Globulins are needed for fast but short term protection.
- For long term protection, get immunized.

What is Tetanus Immune Globulin (TIG)?
TIG is made from blood and contains antibodies to tetanus. It provides fast protection but is not long lasting.

Who should have TIG?
TIG is given when a person who has not had a primary series (at least 3 doses) of tetanus-containing vaccine gets a tetanus-prone wound.

A tetanus prone wound is any injury that has been contaminated with material likely to contain tetanus bacteria (e.g., soil, human or animal feces) or a wound that has dead tissue. Examples include cuts, punctures, burns, frostbite, and gunshot wounds.

How many doses of TIG are needed?
For long lasting protection, a primary series of tetanus-containing vaccine with boosters every 10 years is needed.

People who have had a primary series of tetanus-containing vaccine may need a booster dose of vaccine after a tetanus prone wound, but usually do not need TIG.

People with a weak immune system may need TIG after a tetanus prone wound even if they have been fully immunized against tetanus.

How many doses of TIG are needed?
People need one dose of TIG as soon as possible after a tetanus prone wound.

How well does TIG work?
TIG provides fast protection and helps prevent tetanus disease. It is also used as a treatment in people who get tetanus disease.

Is TIG safe?
TIG is one of the safest blood products available. Canadian Blood Servies carefully screens donors and tests all blood collected. The blood of donors is not used if the donor has known risk factors or tests positive for an infectious disease. TIG is treated with heat and chemicals to kill germs that might be present. The risk of getting an infection from TIG is very small.

Where can I get TIG?
If you have a tetanus prone wound, call Health Link at 811. If TIG is needed it will be given at your local public health office or hospital.

Be sure to let your healthcare provider know if you have not had a primary series (at least 3 doses) of tetanus-containing vaccine and now have a tetanus prone wound. If TIG is needed, it should be given within 24 hours whenever possible.

Are there side effects from TIG?
Reactions to TIG are usually mild and go away in a few days. They may include:
- discomfort where the needle was given
- fever

Hives and general swelling may occur.
It is important to stay for 15 minutes after TIG is given because people can have a rare but serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). If anaphylaxis happens, you will be given medicine to treat the symptoms.

Unusual reactions can happen. Call Health Link at 811 to report any unusual reactions.

**How can I manage side effects?**

- To help with discomfort and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area.
- If you need fever or pain medicine, check with your pharmacist or doctor. Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 19 years old because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems (e.g., weak immune system) must call their doctor whenever they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor—even if you think the fever was due to immunization.

**Is there anyone who cannot have TIG?**

Talk to your healthcare provider before having TIG if you:

- have an allergy to parts of the immune globulin—always tell your healthcare provider about allergies.
- had a severe or unusual reaction after this immune globulin (or a similar one)—always tell your healthcare provider if you have had reactions.
- have an IgA deficiency

You can have TIG if you have a mild illness (e.g., cold), even if you have a fever.

TIG can interfere with live vaccines. You need to wait at least 3 months after having TIG before you can have a live vaccine. If you had a live vaccine less than 14 days before having TIG, ask a public health nurse if the live vaccine needs to be repeated.

**For More Information**

- Call Health Link at 811
- Go to immunizealberta.ca
- Go to myhealth.alberta.ca

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**Quick Facts: Tetanus Disease**

**What it is**

- bacterial infection that causes spasms of the jaw (lock jaw) and other muscles
- can lead to trouble breathing, seizures, and death
- tetanus disease is rare since a vaccine became available in the 1940s

**Who is most at risk**

- people who are unimmunized are at highest risk— if they get tetanus, at least 1 out of 10 will die
- the elderly, people who were born outside of Canada, and people without immunization records are more likely not to have protection for tetanus

**How it spreads**

- this bacteria is common in dirt, manure, and human stool and enters the body by a wound or animal bite