

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 Services 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?

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

- feeling sore where you had the needle
- fever

Hives and general swelling may occur.

It is important to stay for 15 minutes after you have TIG. 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 TIG?

Talk to your healthcare provider before having TIG if you:

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

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

You can still have TIG if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever. Always tell your health care provider if you have allergies or if you have had a side effect from an immune globulin in the past.

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](https://www.immunizealberta.ca)



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

Facts about tetanus disease

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 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.

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 to not have protection for tetanus.

How does it spread?

- 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.