

**Date:** Friday, May 26, 2017

**To:** Central Zone Emergency Department Physicians  
Central Zone Emergency Department Staff  
Central Zone Family Physicians  
U of A Rural Family Medicine Program  
Central Zone Acute Care Pharmacists  
Central Zone Nurse Practitioners  
Central Zone Workplace Health and Safety  
First Nations and Inuit Health

**From:** Dr. Digby Horne, on behalf of Medical Officers of Health – Central Zone

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Recently there have been questions about whether it is necessary to stock both dTap and Td vaccines in Emergency Departments (EDs). In addition, at least one adult patient has received three doses of dTap vaccine when normally only a single dose is necessary.

Both dTap and Td vaccines stimulate active immunity against tetanus and can be used for tetanus prevention during wound management. Both vaccines contain diphtheria and tetanus antigens; dTap also contains acellular pertussis antigens.

As part of the current routine immunization schedule for protection against pertussis, a *single, lifetime dose* of dTap is recommended for all adults anytime after turning 18 years of age (except pregnant women who are recommended to receive a dose with each pregnancy due to the Central Zone pertussis outbreak). Its administration to persons requiring tetanus immunization as part of wound management is a convenient method to improve pertussis protection in adults.

As per the revised [Central Zone Guide to Wound Tetanus Prophylaxis in Emergency Departments \(EDs\)](#), when tetanus immunization is required, dTap vaccine should be provided unless a dTap dose was given anytime after the patient turned 18 years of age. In that situation Td vaccine should be given. Thus, both Td and dTap vaccines may be required and should be stocked in EDs.

*Implementation Tips:*

- A record of immunizations previously received by patients is available in Netcare. Click on the “disc” icon on the upper right side of the Netcare screen.
- Administration of dTap to persons 18 years of age and older was begun in 2012 in Central Zone. To avoid unnecessary duplicate immunization with dTap (and Td),

patients should have their immunization records reviewed before tetanus-containing vaccine is administered.

- Over time, the number of doses of Td utilized in wound management should increase in parallel with the increasing proportion of the adult population who have received their single, lifetime dose of dTap.
- The main revision to the *Guide to Wound Tetanus Prophylaxis in Emergency Departments (EDs)* concerns the availability of immunization records on Netcare. The *Guide* is also posted on the Central Zone MOH website under the “Resources” tab: <http://www.ahs.ca/medstaff/czmoh.aspx>
- The *Guide* is also applicable to patients with wounds who may be seen in Family Physician Offices and Workplace/Occupational Health clinics, except that Tetanus Immune Globulin (TIG) is not released to these sites.
- Questions concerning the interpretation of this Guide can be directed to Communicable Disease Control ph: 403-356-6420 (M. - F. 8:30 am – 4:30 pm).

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

cc:  
CZMA  
CDC  
Senior Operating Officers  
Executive Directors  
Red Deer Directors  
Infection Prevention Control  
Area Directors  
Nurse Practitioners  
Public Health Nursing