

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis Vaccine

(Tdap)

One vaccine that protects against Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis

What is Tetanus?

Tetanus (lockjaw) is a serious disease caused by bacteria found in dirt, dust, and soil. It enters the body through a wound, cut, or scratch. Symptoms include severe muscle spasms and cramping or locking of the jaw. Complications of tetanus can include painful convulsions, difficulty breathing and swallowing, and death. Even with early treatment, tetanus kills two out of every 10 people who get the disease.

What is Diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious disease caused by bacteria of the nose, throat, and skin. It's spread to others through coughing and sneezing. Symptoms include sore throat, fever, and chills. Complications of diphtheria can include breathing problems, heart failure, nerve damage, and death. Diphtheria kills one out of every 10 people who get the disease.

What is Pertussis?

Pertussis (whooping cough) is a serious disease caused by bacteria that spread easily from an infected person through coughing, sneezing, or direct contact. Symptoms include severe coughing spells that can last for weeks. Pertussis can affect people of any age but is most dangerous for babies as coughing fits makes it hard for them to eat, drink, and breathe. Complications of pertussis can include pneumonia,

brain damage, and death. Pertussis kills one to three infants every year in Canada. Adolescents and adults are often the source of infection for infants and young children.

Why get vaccinated?

Immunization is the best way to protect your family against serious diseases. This vaccine is most effective before exposure to the disease.

When it is given as a booster dose, it protects:

- 99% of people against tetanus
- 97% of people against diphtheria
- 85-90% of people against pertussis

Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis vaccination is required to attend school and childcare settings in Ontario. Parents are required to provide a record of immunization or valid exemption before their child attends.

Who is eligible to be vaccinated?

This vaccine is routinely offered as a booster dose 10 years after last dose of tetanus containing vaccine (usually around grade 9).

Tetanus and diphtheria should be boosted every 10 years. Pertussis should be given once in adulthood. It is also recommended that pregnant persons receive 1 dose in every pregnancy regardless of previous immunization history.

Who should not have the vaccine?

- Anyone with a severe allergic reaction to any part of the vaccine or its container.
- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to this vaccine in the past.
- Anyone with a high fever or serious infection worse than a cold.
- Anyone who has a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS) within eight weeks of a previous vaccine, please speak to a healthcare provider about getting this vaccine.

What to expect after the vaccine?

Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis vaccine is safe and well tolerated. Side effects, if they occur, are usually mild and go away in a few days. Common side effects include redness, swelling and/or pain at the injection site.

Headache, fever, tiredness, dizziness, nausea, and muscle aches may also occur, but are less common.

Severe allergic reactions (i.e., anaphylaxis), although rare, are a risk with the administration of any vaccine. It is recommended that you remain in a clinic setting for 15 minutes following immunization as this is the most common timeframe when anaphylaxis will occur.

Stay up to date with your vaccinations

Make sure your healthcare provider updates your personal immunization record (yellow card) after you receive a vaccine. Keep your records in a safe place.

If your child attends licensed childcare or school, please notify Public Health when a vaccine is given. You can report the vaccines in one of the following ways:

- **Online:** The Immunization Connect Ontario (ICON) tool available at immunizewdg.ca allows you to report and view your child's immunization record.
- **Email:** vaccine.records@wdgpublichealth.ca
- **Phone:** 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4396
- **Fax:** 1-519-836-2986

For more information visit:

- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health: wdgpublichealth.ca
- Ontario Ministry of Health: www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines
- Immunize Canada: www.immunize.ca
- Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario: www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization/schedule.aspx