

Important Information about **Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis diseases** and Tetanus, Diphtheria and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

What is TETANUS?

- Tetanus is also called lockjaw.
- It is a disease that occurs when cuts or wounds are infected with tetanus bacteria.
- The bacteria, which are often found in dirt, make a poison that causes the muscles of the body to go into spasm.
- It can be a life-threatening disease.
- It is preventable through immunization.

What is DIPHTHERIA?

- Diphtheria is a very serious disease.
- It can cause an infection of the nose and throat that can affect breathing.
- It can cause an infection of the skin.
- It can cause heart failure or paralysis.
- Even with treatment, about 1 in 10 patients with respiratory diphtheria die. Without treatment, up to half of patients can die from the disease.
- It is preventable through immunization.

What is PERTUSSIS?

- Pertussis is also called whooping cough. It is caused by bacteria.
- It can cause severe coughing spells that can affect breathing. The disease usually lasts 6 to 12 weeks.
- It can cause pneumonia.
- It can cause seizures and even death in some cases.
- It is preventable through immunization.

What Is the Vaccine for Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis?

- Tdap is a single vaccine which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis.
- Immunization with Tdap is the best way to prevent diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis.
- The vaccine is given by injection.

Who Should Receive Tdap Vaccine?

The Nova Scotia schedule recommends that this vaccine be given:

- in the School Immunization Program
- to adults who have not received a dose of acellular pertussis vaccine after high school.
- Tdap vaccine should be offered to pregnant persons during every pregnancy.

CAUTION

Who Should NOT Receive Tdap Vaccine?

- People who have had a serious allergic reaction to a previous dose or any component of Tdap vaccine.
- People who are sick or have a fever (temperature of 38.5°C/101.3°F or greater).

Please read other side.

What to Expect Following Immunization with **Tetanus, Diphtheria and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine**

VACCINE INFORMATION

This vaccine is important in protecting you from tetanus (lockjaw), diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).

People should stay in the clinic for at least 15 minutes after receiving any type of immunization to monitor possible reaction. As with any vaccine there is a slight possibility that a more serious reaction could occur.

What Are the Possible Side Effects from the Vaccine?

- The most common side effects of Tdap vaccine are pain, redness, and swelling where the needle goes in.
- Other, less common side effects are: mild headache, fever, diarrhea, nausea, chills, body ache, decreased energy, and sore or swollen joints.

As fever may occur, make sure you have acetaminophen or ibuprofen at home. Follow the instructions that come with the product. These medications should not be taken if you have certain medical conditions. Talk to your health care provider about your medical history before using either of these medications.

Contact Your Health Care Provider If

- The fever lasts longer than 24 hours.
- Temperature is 38.5°C (101.3°F) or greater.
- The fever does not come down after acetaminophen or ibuprofen is taken.

Questions?

If you have any questions about tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, or the Tdap vaccine, please call your local Public Health office or your health care provider.

For more information on immunization, please visit the websites of

- Immunize Canada at immunize.ca/en/default.aspx
- the Public Health Agency of Canada at phac-aspc.gc.ca
- 811 at <https://811.novascotia.ca/>