



Tdap Vaccine (Adacel[®], Boostrix[®])

(Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Acellular Pertussis)

What is Tdap vaccine?

Babies and young children are routinely immunized against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus and polio. This primary immunization is normally completed when the child is 4-6 years old. After that, a "booster" dose of diphtheria and tetanus is required every 10 years. Tdap vaccines include pertussis (whooping cough) as well as diphtheria and tetanus. This booster dose is normally given at age 14-16 years of age. Starting in August 2011 the publicly funded vaccine schedule expanded to include a single lifetime booster dose of Tdap vaccine for adults who did not receive a dose of acellular pertussis during adolescence. Two Tdap vaccines are used in Canada, Adacel[®] and Boostrix[®].

What is tetanus (lockjaw)?

It is a serious disease that can happen when dirt containing the tetanus spore gets into a break in the skin. It does not spread from one person to another. It causes severe cramping of the muscles in the neck, arms, legs and stomach, and painful convulsions. Even with early treatment, it causes death in two out of every 10 people who get it.

What is diphtheria?

It is a serious disease of the nose, throat and skin that is passed on to others through coughing and sneezing. It causes sore throat, fever and chills and can have complications of breathing problems, heart failure and nerve damage.

What is pertussis (whooping cough)?

Whooping cough is a respiratory disease that spreads very easily by coughing and sneezing. It is a frequent cause of a prolonged coughing illness in teenagers who can then pass it on to infants and young children.

Whooping cough is very serious in infants and young children. They have spells of violent coughing with mucous, followed by a crowing sound or whoop. This is often followed by vomiting. The cough can cause breathing to stop for a short period of time. The cough can last for weeks and make it hard to hear, swallow or even breathe.

Is Tdap vaccine safe?

Yes. Mild pain, swelling and redness for a few days are common at the spot where the needle was given. A few people may get a mild fever, lose their appetite or feel tired for a day or two after the needle. The benefits of this vaccine are much greater than the risks associated with getting the diseases.

Who should not get the vaccine?

Tdap vaccine should not be given under the following conditions:

- High fever (over 39°C) or serious infection worse than a cold.
- Serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to previous doses of diphtheria, tetanus or pertussis vaccine.
- Severe allergy to any component of the vaccine.
- Pregnancy - consult with primary health care provider.

- Diagnosis of Guillain-Barre' syndrome that has occurred within eight weeks of getting vaccine containing tetanus toxoid.
- Blood clotting problems after receiving diphtheria and/or tetanus vaccine.
- Development of a serious nervous system disorder within 7 days of receiving a pertussis-containing vaccine.

What should I do if serious side effects do occur?

Depending on urgency, you should go to your doctor/nurse practitioner or the nearest emergency department if any of the following symptoms occur within three days of getting the needle:

- Hives.
- Swelling of the mouth and throat.
- Trouble breathing, hoarseness or wheezing.
- High fever (over 39° C or 103° F).
- Convulsions or seizures.
- Other serious reactions to the vaccine.

Will I get a record of this vaccination?

The nurse will provide you with a record of this vaccination. It is very important to keep this record. You may need proof of this at a later time.

For more information, please contact a member of the Vaccine Preventable Disease Team by calling the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.

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