



Tetanus diphtheria and Polio (TdP) Vaccine

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect against some very serious infections. **The Canadian Paediatric Society and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization** strongly recommends routine immunization. Tetanus, diphtheria and Polio is a three-in-one needle. It protects against diphtheria, tetanus and polio. It is recommended for use in persons seven years of age and older.

What is Tetanus? Diphtheria? Polio?

Tetanus or lockjaw is a serious disease that can happen if dirt with the tetanus germ gets into a cut in the skin. Tetanus germs are found in everything, usually in soil, dust, and manure. It does not spread from person to person. Tetanus causes cramping of the muscles in the neck, arms, legs and stomach, and painful convulsions which can be severe enough to break bones. Even with early treatment, tetanus kills two out of every 10 people who get it.

Diphtheria is a serious disease of the nose, throat and skin. It causes sore throat, fever and chills. It can be complicated by breathing problems, heart failure and nerve damage. Diphtheria kills one out of every 10 people who get the disease. It is passed to others through coughing and sneezing.

Polio is a dangerous disease that people can get from drinking water or eating food with the polio germ in it. This disease can cause nerve damage and paralyze a person for life. It can paralyze muscles used for breathing, talking, eating and walking. It can also cause death.

How well does the vaccine protect my child?

When the vaccine is given in the recommended number of shots, it protects over 95% of recipients against tetanus, over 85% against diphtheria and 99% against polio. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may catch them.

At what age should my child be vaccinated with the vaccine?

Td Polio vaccine is given to people seven years or older to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and polio. If your child received the four needles of the Pentacel vaccine at two, four, six, and 18 months, and the Quadracel vaccine at four to six years then the Td Polio vaccine would not be required. A booster of Tetanus and diphtheria (not Polio) are required every 10 years thereafter.

Is the 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. Your doctor may suggest that you give your child a medicine called acetaminophen to prevent pain and fever. The benefits of this vaccine are much greater than the risks associated with getting the diseases. There is no risk of a pregnant woman or anyone else catching any disease from a child who has been vaccinated recently.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if any of the following develop within three days of getting the needle:

- High fever (over 40°C or 104°F)
- Convulsions or seizures.
- Very pale colour and serious drowsiness.
- Hives.
- Swelling of the face or mouth.
- Trouble breathing.
- Other serious problems.

Who should not get the vaccine?

The doctor may decide not to give the Td Polio vaccine if the person has a:

- High fever or serious infection worse than a cold.
- Severe allergy to an antibiotic called neomycin or polymyxin B or Streptomycin.
- Serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to previous doses of this vaccine.
- Severe allergy to any component of the vaccine.
- Diagnosis of Guillan-Barre syndrome that has occurred within six weeks of getting vaccine containing tetanus toxoid.

Record of Protection

After you/your child receive any vaccination, make sure the doctor/nurse updates your copy of the vaccination record card. In addition, please report the vaccination to the Public Health Unit.

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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