

TETANUS AND DIPHTHERIA (Td) VACCINE

What is the tetanus and diphtheria (Td) vaccine?

The Td vaccine protects against two diseases: tetanus (lockjaw) and diphtheria.

The vaccine is approved by Health Canada and is provided free as a part of the [Routine New Brunswick Immunization Schedule](#) for adults.

In New Brunswick, the tetanus and diphtheria vaccine is provided in early childhood, combined with other vaccines such as pertussis (whooping cough) and polio (DTaP-IPV) and Haemophilus influenzae type b (DTaP-IPV-Hib). These are given as a series of doses to infants and toddlers and as a booster dose at school entry and in grade nine (Tdap).

What are the benefits of the vaccine?

The Td vaccine is the best way to protect against tetanus and diphtheria, which are serious and sometimes fatal diseases. When you are immunized, you also help protect others as well.

How is the vaccine given?

The Td vaccine is given as an injection into the upper arm.

Who should receive the vaccine?

The Td vaccine can be given to persons seven years and older. Adults should have a Td vaccine every ten years if they received a series earlier in life. This booster dose strengthens or boosts the immune system to help protect against tetanus and diphtheria.

The vaccine can also be given as a three dose series to adults who have not been immunized or do not have a record of prior immunization. The vaccine can be given to people with serious cuts or deep wounds whose last tetanus vaccine was given five or more years ago.

Who should not receive the vaccine?

The vaccine should not be given if you:

- - had a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine in the past;
- - are allergic to any of the ingredients of the vaccine or its container; or
- - are less than seven years of age.

What are the possible reactions after receiving the vaccine?

Reactions are generally mild and last one to two days. The most common reactions include soreness, redness and/or swelling where the vaccine was given.

With any vaccine there is an extremely rare possibility (less than one in a million people) of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. For this reason, it is important to remain in the clinic for 15 minutes after you or your child receive the Td vaccine. Signs of this reaction may include rash, difficulty breathing or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This reaction can be treated.

What can be done for reactions to the vaccine?

- A cold compress at the injection site may reduce discomfort.
- For discomfort and fever, you may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or Ibuprofen (Advil®) according to the manufacturer's directions.
- Aspirin (ASA) should **NOT** be given to children younger than 18 years due to its link to Reye's syndrome.

Any unexpected or serious reaction to a vaccine should be reported to your health-care provider.

What else you need to know.

Inform your immunization provider if you have any health problems or allergies.

Your immunization provider will give you a record of immunization. Keep this record in a safe place and bring it with you when you are next due for immunization.

Individuals 16 years and older can give their own consent. Children younger than 16 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

If you have any unusual reactions to the vaccine, or you have any questions or concerns, please contact your health-care provider.

Further Information

The publicly funded Td vaccine is provided through health-care providers.

For additional information, contact your health-care provider, [local Public Health office](#) or Tele-Care 811.

Useful websites:

- Government of New-Brunswick <http://www.gnb.ca/health>
- Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion <http://www.immunize.cpha.ca>
- Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca>

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