



TETANUS AND DIPHTHERIA / Td VACCINE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



1. About the diseases ?

- ***Tetanus (lockjaw) and Diphtheria are serious diseases.***
- Tetanus is caused by a germ that enters the body through a cut or wound.
- Diphtheria spreads when germs pass from an infected person to the nose or throat of others.
- ***Tetanus causes:***
 - serious, painful spasms of all muscles.
 - breathing problems.
- ***Tetanus can lead to:***
 - “locking” of the jaw so the patient cannot open his or her mouth or swallow.
 - death.
- ***Diphtheria causes:***
 - a thick coating in the nose, throat, or airway.
- ***Diphtheria can lead to:***
 - breathing problems.
 - heart failure.
 - paralysis.
 - death.

2. About the vaccines:

Vaccination is the best way to protect against Tetanus and Diphtheria.

3. Who should get Td vaccine and when ?

- Td is made for people 7 years of age and older.
- People who have not gotten at least 3 doses of any Tetanus and Diphtheria vaccine (DTP, DTaP or DT) during their lifetime should do so using Td. After a person gets the third dose, a Td dose is needed every 10 years through out life.

Other vaccines may be given at the same time as Td.

4. Some people should not get Td vaccine or should wait:

- If you ever had a ***serious allergic reaction*** or other problem with Td, or any other Tetanus and Diphtheria vaccine (DTP, DTaP or DT).
- If you now have a moderate or severe illness.
- If you are pregnant.

5. What are the risks from Td vaccine ?

A vaccine, like any medicine, is capable of causing serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions.
The risk of Td vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.

***Getting Td vaccine is much safer than getting the diseases.
Most people who get Td vaccine do not have any problems with it.***

Mild problems:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given.
These problems can be worse in adults who get Td vaccine very often.

If these problems occur, they usually start within hours to a day or two after vaccination. They may last 1-2 days.

Severe problems (very rare):

- Serious allergic reactions, within a few minutes to a few hours of the shot, ***are very rare.***
- Deep, aching pain and muscle wasting in upper arm(s). This starts 2 days to 4 weeks after the shot, and may last many months.

6. What if there is a moderate or severe reaction ?

What should I look for ?

- Any unusual condition, such as a serious allergic reaction, high fever or unusual behavior. Serious allergic reactions are extremely rare with any vaccine. If one were to occur, it would be within a few minutes to a few hours after the shot. Signs can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

What should I do ?

- Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- Tell your doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.

7. How can I learn more ?

- Ask your doctor or nurse. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Contact the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
Visit CDC websites at: www.cdc.gov/nip