

# Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis and Polio (Tdap-IPV) Vaccine



Region of Waterloo  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND  
EMERGENCY SERVICES

## What is diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious infection of the nose, throat and skin. It is passed to others through coughing and sneezing. It causes sore throat, fever and chills. It can lead to breathing problems, heart failure and nerve damage. Treatment for diphtheria includes an antitoxin, followed by antibiotics. However, it is becoming more difficult to treat the diphtheria bacteria due to antibiotic resistance. Diphtheria kills 1 out of every 10 people who get the disease.

## What is tetanus?

Tetanus or lockjaw is a serious disease that causes cramping of the muscles in the neck, arms, leg and stomach and painful convulsions which can be severe enough to break bones. Even with early treatment, tetanus kills 10–20% of those who get it. You can get tetanus when the germs that can be found everywhere (usually in soil, dust, manure) get into an open wound. It does not spread from person to person.

## What is pertussis?

Pertussis or whooping cough is a serious disease especially in children. Children who get this disease have spells of violent coughing that can cause them to vomit or stop breathing for a short period of time. The cough can last for weeks and make it hard for the child to eat, drink or even breathe. Pneumonia can occur in more than two out of 10 children with pertussis. It can also cause brain damage and death. These problems happen most often in babies. Pertussis spreads very easily from an infected person to others through coughing or sneezing.

## What is polio?

Polio is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus. It invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis in a matter of hours. You get it from drinking water or eating food with the polio germ in it. It is also spread from person to person. Polio mainly affects children under five years of age.

Initial symptoms are fever, fatigue, headache, vomiting, stiffness in the neck and pain in the limbs. One in 200 infections leads to irreversible paralysis (usually in the legs). Among those paralysed, 5–10% die when their breathing muscles become immobilized.

## Who should get the vaccine?

Children 4 years of age and above are eligible to receive the vaccine.

## Tdap-IPV Vaccine:

Children who have received their primary series (ie four doses of vaccine) for the prevention of tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio should receive Tdap-IPV vaccine as a booster dose at 4–6 years of age. This dose should be given at the time of school entry.

Individuals 7 years of age and older who have not completed their primary series for prevention of tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio should receive up to three doses of Tdap-IPV vaccine, depending on age and immune status.

When Tdap-IPV vaccine is given as recommended, it protects 85 per cent of children against pertussis, over 95 per cent of children against diphtheria, virtually 100 per cent of children against tetanus and 99 per cent of children against polio. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may catch them.

If your child misses a needle you should get it as soon as possible. Your health care provider will advise you which needles to get and when to come back for the other needles.

## Who should NOT get the vaccine?

- Anyone with a high fever or serious infection worse than a cold
- Anyone with a severe allergy to any component of the vaccine including: bovine albumin, aluminum, phenoxyethanol, neomycin, streptomycin or polymyxin B
- A serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous dose of Tdap-IPV or DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine

## Side effects

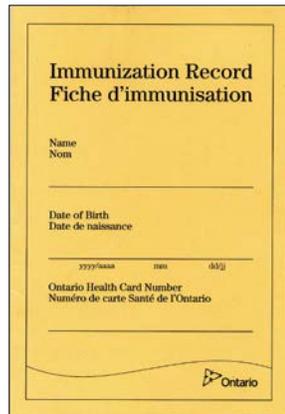
Most reactions are mild and include soreness, swelling and redness for a few days in the area where the needle was given. Some children get a fever, rash, lose their appetite or are fussy or drowsy for a day or two after the needle.

When should I seek medical attention?

If you develop hives, swelling of the face or mouth, trouble breathing, serious drowsiness or other serious problems.

## Your record of protection

After any immunization, ensure your personal immunization record or "yellow card" is updated. Keep it in a safe place.



## Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or contact Public Health at 519-575-4400.

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request.

**Region of Waterloo Public Health  
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[www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph)

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