

TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA, PERTUSSIS & POLIO VACCINE INFORMATION

(Adacel®Polio or Boostrix®Polio Vaccine)

WHAT IS TETANUS DISEASE AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

- Tetanus is also known as lockjaw
- Tetanus is caused by toxin produced by the bacteria *clostridium tetani* which enter the body through a cut or wound in the skin
- Tetanus is found in the soil and intestines of animals and humans
- Tetanus causes painful, prolonged muscle spasms of the jaw, neck, arms, leg, and stomach. Neurological damage and death can occur
- Tetanus is not contagious from person to person
- Tetanus occurs all over the world

WHAT IS DIPHTHERIA AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

- Diphtheria is transmitted by person-to-person spread from the respiratory tract or, rarely, by contact with articles soiled with excretions of infected people
- Symptoms include a mild fever, sore throat, difficulty swallowing, extreme tiredness, and loss of appetite. It can progress to difficulty breathing, and choking in young children
- Diphtheria toxin causes a greyish white membrane to develop in the throat that makes it difficult to breathe and can be fatal
- Diphtheria death rate is 5% to 10%; the highest rates occur among very young or elderly people that have not received the vaccine and in countries that rarely see this disease-because diagnosis is often late
- Other serious complications of the heart and nervous system can result from diphtheria
- It is now very rare in Canada because of immunization but it is still common in developing countries where vaccines are not given routinely

WHAT IS PERTUSSIS AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

- Pertussis (whooping cough) is a highly contagious bacterial illness spread by respiratory droplets
- It causes violent coughing that can lead to choking or vomiting

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- The coughing can be so intense that a "whooping" sound is made when trying to catch the next breath. The cough can last for weeks or months and without treatment, can cause brain damage or even death
- Pertussis can cause babies to stop breathing or have seizures
- It is most dangerous for children under 1 year old especially if they are not vaccinated or not fully vaccinated
- Pertussis outbreaks occur in Ontario every two - five years

WHAT IS POLIO AND HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

- Polio is a serious disease that can cause nerve damage or paralysis for life
- Polio virus is spread by contaminated food or water
- Canada has been polio free for the last 20 years but if polio exists in other countries, it can be imported to Canada

HOW CAN TETANUS, DIPHTHERIA, PERTUSSIS, AND POLIO DISEASES BE PREVENTED?

- Vaccination is the best protection against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio. This vaccine is safe and effective
- It is licensed for people who are four years and older (younger children need a different dosage of vaccine that can be received at a doctor's office)
- Proof of vaccination against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis and polio, or a valid exemption, is required by law for all children attending school in Ontario

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF THIS VACCINE?

- Redness, swelling or pain at the injection site are the most common
- Fever, chills, headache, and fatigue

WHO SHOULD NOT HAVE THIS VACCINE?

- People who have ever had a severe allergic (anaphylactic) reaction to a previous dose of this vaccine
- People with a severe (anaphylactic) allergy to any vaccine component

WHO SHOULD CONSULT THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE VACCINATION?

- People with complicated medical issues or previous severe reactions to vaccines should consult their health care provider before vaccination

REFERENCES

- [Pertussis \(whooping cough\) - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/vaccines-and-immunization/diseases/pertussis-whooping-cough.html)
- [Pertussis \(whooping cough\) vaccines: Canadian Immunization Guide - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/vaccines-and-immunization/diseases/pertussis-whooping-cough/vaccines.html)