

Vaccine Information Sheet

Td – Tetanus diphtheria vaccine

What is Td?

Td is a vaccine used to help prevent Tetanus and Diphtheria. **Tetanus** and **diphtheria** are very serious diseases. They are rare in Australia today, but people who do become infected often have severe complications. Td vaccine is used to protect adolescents and adults from both diseases.

Both tetanus and diphtheria are infections caused by bacteria. Diphtheria spreads from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Tetanus-causing bacteria enter the body through cuts, scratches, or wounds.

TETANUS (Lockjaw) causes painful muscle tightening and stiffness, usually all over the body.

- It can lead to tightening of muscles in the head and neck so you can't open your mouth, swallow, or sometimes even breathe. Tetanus kills about 1 out of every 10 people who are infected even after receiving the best medical care.

DIPHTHERIA can cause a thick coating to form in the back of the throat.

- It can lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure, and death.

How does it work

Td vaccine can protect adolescents and adults from tetanus and diphtheria. Td is usually given as a booster dose every 10 years but it can also be given earlier after a severe and dirty wound or burn.

Td may safely be given at the same time as other vaccines.

How is it given

Td is given as an IM injection, usually into the upper arm muscle by a doctor or vaccination nurse. The usual dose for adults is 0.5mL, administered once every 10 years.

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Before you are given TD

A person who has ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction after a previous dose of any tetanus or diphtheria containing vaccine, OR has a severe allergy to any part of this vaccine, should not get Td vaccine. *Tell the person giving the vaccine about any severe allergies.*

- Talk to your vaccination nurse if you:
 - had *severe* pain or swelling after any vaccine containing diphtheria or tetanus,
 - ever had a condition called Guillain Barré Syndrome (GBS),
 - aren't feeling well on the day the vaccination is scheduled.

What are the possible side effects of TD

A vaccine, like any medicine, could possibly cause serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions. The risk of TD causing serious harm is extremely low. Getting Td vaccine is much safer than getting the disease.

Most people who get Td vaccine do not have any problems with it.

Mild Problems following Td vaccine can include pain where the injection was given, redness or swelling at the injection site, mild fever (rare), headache, tiredness, fever (rare).

Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include hives, swelling of the face and throat, difficulty breathing, a fast heartbeat, dizziness, and weakness. These would start a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

If you feel anything that concerns you after your vaccination, contact your GP or Health Direct on 1800 022 222.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

Use of TD in pregnancy

TD vaccine is not routinely recommended for pregnant or breastfeeding women. Please inform your Manager and this can be discussed with the nurse or Doctor prior to your vaccination date.

As a precaution after your vaccination, it is recommended that you wait in the vicinity of the immunisation clinic for 15 minutes.

If you have any other questions, you can discuss these with your nurse on the day of vaccination or contact work Health Professionals on 9204 1999.