

## Vaccine Information

### BOOSTRIX (Adult) - Diphtheria, Tetanus, acellular Pertussis Vaccine (dTpa vaccine)

#### What is Boostrix

BOOSTRIX is a vaccine used as a booster to prevent three diseases: diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) in adults and children aged 10 years and older who have been previously vaccinated against these diseases.

**Diphtheria** is a bacterial infection that can be transmitted through respiratory secretions (through coughing and sneezing of an infected person). The bacteria can cause swelling to the membranes in the throat, which can lead to difficulty in swallowing and breathing. The bacteria produce a poison that can spread throughout the body causing paralysis and heart failure. About one in ten people die from a diphtheria infection.

**Tetanus** is a bacterial infection that is transmitted from soil, dust or manure through broken skin such as burns, fractures, deep wounds contaminated with soil, dust, horse manure or wood splinters. It cannot be passed from person to person. Tetanus is often a fatal disease, which attacks the nervous system causing spasms in the neck and jaw. Tetanus can cause breathing difficulties, painful muscle spasms and abnormal heart rhythms.

**Pertussis (whooping cough)** is a highly contagious disease causing a persistent severe cough spread through the respiratory secretions of an infected person. Whooping cough is most serious in children under 12 months of age often leading to hospital admission. Around one in 200 babies under the age of six months die from contracting whooping cough.

Vaccination with dTpa is recommended for all adults who wish to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill with pertussis. This is increasingly important in adults who work within the health care setting because of the significant risk of nosocomial transmission of pertussis to vulnerable patients. Vaccination should occur every ten years to promote immunity to the disease.

#### What is in the vaccine & how does it work

The BOOSTRIX vaccine contains non-infectious substances from the diphtheria and tetanus toxoid, purified proteins of pertussis toxoid, filamentous hemagglutinin, pertactin, as well as inactive ingredients-aluminium salts, formaldehyde, polysorbate 80 and glycine. It will not give you Diphtheria, Tetanus or Pertussis.

The vaccine works by causing the body to produce its own protection (antibodies) against these diseases. Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis are all serious life-threatening diseases caused by bacterial infection.

#### How is the vaccine given

BOOSTRIX is given as a single injection administered into the upper arm muscle.

#### Before you are given Boostrix

Tell the nurse if you have

- lowered immunity
- suffered collapse, fainting, fits or seizures brought (particularly if brought on by a high body temperature or previous vaccination)
- had any problems as a result of a previous vaccination

- not previously received the full course of diphtheria and tetanus vaccination
- have had an allergic reaction to any of the components of Boostrix (see *What is in the vaccine* above)
- cried for >3hours with-in 2 days (after) a previous vaccination
- had another vaccination recently or are taking any medicines, particularly if they suppress immunity such as high dose steroids
- a child that you are breast feeding or if you are pregnant

### **What are the possible side effects of the vaccine**

BOOSTRIX is safe and well-tolerated. Most side effects of the dTpa vaccine are minor and last only a few days. These can include pain, redness, swelling, a hard lump, bruising or itching at the injection site; feeling generally unwell with fever, aches and pains. Other mild side effects may include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, constipation or diarrhoea and restlessness.

As with all vaccines, there is a very small risk of a serious allergic reaction. Tell your doctor immediately or go to accident and emergency if you notice any of the following: wheezing or shortness of breath, swelling of the face, lips, mouth, throat or neck which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing, swelling of the hands, feet, or ankles, pinkish, itchy swellings on the skin, also called hives or nettle rash, skin rash, itchiness

If you have these, you may have had a serious allergic reaction to BOOSTRIX. You may need urgent medical attention. Most of these side effects occur within 15-30 minutes, or sometimes within a few hours of 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 in Pregnancy**

Pregnant women are encouraged to have the dTpa vaccine. The vaccine protects the mother from developing and potentially transmitting the disease to the =e baby. It also provides the baby with antibodies against the disease. These antibodies can protect the baby from pertussis infection during the first months of life when they are too young to be vaccinated.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunizations recommends pertussis vaccine (dTpa) be given though the third trimester of every pregnancy. The optimal time for vaccination is between 28-32 weeks of pregnancy but can be given at any time during the third trimester.

**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.