TETANUS AND DIPHTHERIA VACCINE (Td)

What you need to know before you or your child gets the vaccine

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention

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:	**Diphtheria causes:**
serious, painful spasms of all muscles	a thick coating in the nose, throat, or airway
It can lead to: - "locking" of the jaw so the patient cannot open his or her mouth or swallow	**It can lead to:** - breathing problems - heart failure - paralysis - death

ABOUT THE VACCINES

Benefits of the vaccines

Vaccination is the best way to protect against tetanus and diphtheria. Because of vaccination, there are many fewer cases of these diseases. Cases are rare in children because most get DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis), DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and acellular Pertussis), or DT (Diphtheria and Tetanus) vaccines. There would be many more cases if we stopped vaccinating people.

When should you get Td vaccine?

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 all through life.

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

Tell your doctor or nurse if the person getting the vaccine:

- ever had a serious allergic reaction or other problem with Td, or any other tetanus and diphtheria vaccine (DTP, DTaP, or DT)
- now has a moderate or severe illness
- is pregnant

If you are not sure, ask your doctor or nurse.

What are the risks from Td vaccine?

As with any medicine, there are very small risks that serious problems, even death, could occur after getting a vaccine.

The risks from the vaccine are <u>much smaller</u> than the risks from the diseases if people stopped using vaccine.

Almost all people who get Td have no problems from it.

Mild problems

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

- soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given

These problems can be worse in adults who get Td vaccine very often.

Acetaminophen or ibuprofen (non-aspirin) may be used to reduce soreness.

Severe problems

These problems happen **very rarely**:

- serious allergic reaction
- 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.

What to do if there is a serious reaction:

☞ Call a doctor or get the person to a doctor right away.

☞ Write down what happened and the date and time it happened.

☞ Ask your doctor, nurse, or health department to file a Vaccine Adverse Event Report form or call:
(800) 822-7967 (toll-free)

The **National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program** gives compensation (payment) for persons thought to be injured by vaccines. For details call:
(800) 338-2382 (toll-free)

If you want to learn more, ask your doctor or nurse. She/he can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.