



# Tdap: tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis

## About Tdap

Tdap vaccine can prevent tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis infections.

### Tetanus (T), aka "Lockjaw"

- Caused by the *C. tetani* bacteria, which is found in many environments, and enters the body through cuts or wounds.
- Can cause:
  - painful muscle tightening and spasms
  - inability to open the mouth or swallow
  - fever and sweating
  - high blood pressure and heart rate
- Causes death in about 11% of cases.

### Diphtheria (D)

- Spreads person to person by respiratory droplets, such as coughing or sneezing, or by touching infected open sores or wounds.
- Can lead to difficulty breathing, heart failure, paralysis, and death.
- Untreated, causes death in 40-50% of cases.

### Pertussis (P)

- Can be extremely dangerous in babies and young children, leading to:
  - uncontrollable, violent coughing
  - pneumonia
  - brain damage
  - death
- In adults it can lead to weight loss, loss of consciousness, and rib fractures.
- Causes about 160,000 deaths worldwide each year, with higher rates in babies and young children.

## Important details

**Tdap** is only for adults and adolescents **7 years and older**.

**Adolescents** should receive a **single dose** of Tdap, preferably at age **11 or 12 years**.

**Pregnant people** should get a dose of Tdap **during every pregnancy**, preferably during the early part of the third trimester, to help protect the newborn from pertussis.

**Infants** are most at risk for severe, life-threatening complications from pertussis.

**Adults** should receive a **booster** dose of either Tdap or Td (a vaccine that protects against tetanus and diphtheria only) every **10 years**, or after 5 years in the case of a severe or dirty wound or burn.

Tdap may be given at the same time with other needed vaccines.



# What to expect after vaccination

It's normal to experience immune response after vaccination— this is how you know the vaccine is working. Side effects are usually mild and resolve on their own within a few days. Some normal immune responses after the Tdap vaccine include:

- pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site
- tiredness
- irritability
- fever
- loss of appetite

People with minor illnesses, such as a cold, may be vaccinated. People who are moderately or severely ill should usually wait until they recover before getting Tdap vaccine.

Tell your vaccination provider if the person getting the vaccine:

- has had an allergic reaction after a previous dose of any vaccine that protects against tetanus, diphtheria, or pertussis
- has any severe, life-threatening allergies
- has had a coma, decreased level of consciousness, or prolonged seizures within 7 days after a previous dose of any pertussis vaccine (DTP, DTaP, or Tdap)
- has ever had Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS)
- has had severe pain or swelling after a previous dose of any vaccine that protects against tetanus or diphtheria

People sometimes faint after medical procedures, including vaccination. Tell your provider if you feel dizzy, have vision changes, or ringing in your ears. As with any medicine, there is a very small chance of a vaccine causing a severe allergic reaction, other serious injury, or death.

# Tdap vaccination statistics

**Only 30.1%**

of adults 19 years and older received Tdap vaccination in the preceding 10 years, as of 2019

**18,000+**

pertussis cases were reported to the CDC in 2019, but experts say many cases are undiagnosed

**54 days**

was the average length of time that adults experienced whooping cough with a pertussis infection

For more vaccine information, go to [immunize.utah.gov](https://immunize.utah.gov) or scan the QR code!

