VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENT

Td Vaccine

(Tetanus and Diphtheria)

What You Need to Know

Many Vaccine Information Statements are available in Spanish and other languages. See www.immunize.org/vis

Hojas de información sobre vacunas están disponibles en español y en muchos otros idiomas. Visite www.immunize.org/vis

1 Why get vaccinated?

Tetanus and **diphtheria** are very serious diseases. They are rare in the United States today, but people who do become infected often have severe complications. Td vaccine is used to protect adolescents and adults from both of these 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.

Before vaccines, as many as 200,000 cases of diphtheria and hundreds of cases of tetanus were reported in the United States each year. Since vaccination began, reports of cases for both diseases have dropped by about 99%.

2 Td vaccine

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.

Another vaccine, called Tdap, which protects against pertussis in addition to tetanus and diphtheria, is sometimes recommended instead of Td vaccine.

Your doctor or the person giving you the vaccine can give you more information.

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

3 Some people should not get this vaccine

- 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 doctor if you:
  - have seizures or another nervous system problem,
  - 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 shot is scheduled.

4 Risks of a vaccine reaction

With any medicine, including vaccines, there is a chance of side effects. These are usually mild and go away on their own. Serious reactions are also possible but are rare.

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

Mild Problems following Td vaccine:
(Did not interfere with activities)

- Pain where the shot was given (about 8 people in 10)
- Redness or swelling where the shot was given (about 1 person in 4)
- Mild fever (rare)
- Headache (about 1 person in 4)
- Tiredness (about 1 person in 4)

Moderate Problems following Td vaccine:
(Interfered with activities, but did not require medical attention)

- Fever over 102°F (rare)

Severe Problems following Td vaccine:
(Unable to perform usual activities; required medical attention)

- Swelling, severe pain, bleeding and/or redness in the arm where the shot was given (rare).

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Problems that could happen after any vaccine:

- People sometimes faint after a medical procedure, including vaccination. Sitting or lying down for about 15 minutes can help prevent fainting, and injuries caused by a fall. Tell your doctor if you feel dizzy, or have vision changes or ringing in the ears.
- Some people get severe pain in the shoulder and have difficulty moving the arm where a shot was given. This happens very rarely.
- Any medication can cause a severe allergic reaction. Such reactions from a vaccine are very rare, estimated at fewer than 1 in a million doses, and would happen within a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

As with any medicine, there is a very remote chance of a vaccine causing a serious injury or death.

The safety of vaccines is always being monitored. For more information, visit: **www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/**

5 What if there is a serious reaction?

What should I look for?

- Look for anything that concerns you, such as signs of a severe allergic reaction, very high fever, or unusual behavior.

  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 usually start a few minutes to a few hours after the vaccination.

What should I do?

- If you think it is a severe allergic reaction or other emergency that can't wait, call 9-1-1 or get the person to the nearest hospital. Otherwise, call your doctor.
- Afterward, the reaction should be reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Your doctor might file this report, or you can do it yourself through the VAERS web site at **www.vaers.hhs.gov**, or by calling **1-800-822-7967**.

VAERS does not give medical advice.

6 The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program

The National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) is a federal program that was created to compensate people who may have been injured by certain vaccines.

Persons who believe they may have been injured by a vaccine can learn about the program and about filing a claim by calling **1-800-338-2382** or visiting the VICP website at **www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation**. There is a time limit to file a claim for compensation.

7 How can I learn more?

- Ask your doctor. He or she can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)**
  - Visit CDC's website at **www.cdc.gov/vaccines**

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