

# Tdap Vaccine (Adacel®/Boostrix®) Fact Sheet

The tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine helps to protect children and adults against all three diseases. When given in the recommended schedule, the Tdap vaccine helps protect almost everyone from tetanus and diphtheria and most people from pertussis

## What are tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis?

- **Tetanus**, or lockjaw, is a serious bacterial infection you can get if dirt from soil, dust or manure, containing the tetanus germ, gets into a cut in the skin. It does not spread from person to person. Tetanus can cause cramping of the muscles, convulsions and death.
- **Diphtheria** is a serious bacterial infection of the nose, throat and skin, and it is spread through coughing, sneezing and skin-to-skin contact. Diphtheria causes sore throat, fever and chills and can result in breathing problems, heart failure, paralysis and death.
- **Pertussis, or whooping cough**, is a serious bacterial infection of the airways that occurs in people of all ages, but it can be especially severe in children. It spreads easily through coughing, sneezing or close face-to-face contact. Pertussis can cause violent coughing that ends in a “whooping” sound and may last for weeks to months. It causes vomiting and makes it hard to breathe, eat or drink. Pertussis can lead to pneumonia, seizures and brain damage. It can be fatal, especially in infants and children.

## Who should get the publicly funded (free) Tdap vaccine in Ontario?

- A one-time dose of Tdap vaccine is recommended for **adolescents 14-16 years of age** (and up to 18) to boost their protection against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.
- A single, life-time dose of Tdap vaccine is recommended for **adults 19 years of age and older**, whether they had a previous dose of Tdap in adolescence or not.
  - Parents, grandparents or other adult household contacts of newborns, infants and young children, as well as health care workers, are considered priority groups for receiving the Tdap vaccine.
  - The adult dose of pertussis-containing Tdap vaccine replaces one of the tetanus diphtheria (Td) booster doses that is recommended for adults every 10 years.
- Pregnant women who have **not** received a dose of a pertussis containing vaccine in adulthood should be encouraged to receive Tdap vaccination after 26 weeks of pregnancy to give a higher level of antibody protection from pertussis to their newborn infant.
- Tdap is also available for children after their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, to complete an incomplete series, or for primary immunization for those 7 years of age and older.

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### What are the common side effects of this vaccine?

- Some people may feel sore and swollen for a few days where the needle was given.
- Some people may have general muscle aches, fever and feel tired for a day or two.
- Tylenol® or ibuprofen may be taken afterwards, as directed, to reduce discomfort or fever.
- **Children under 19 years of age must NOT be given** ASA, Aspirin® or salicylates.

### Who should not get the Tdap vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to this vaccine in the past, or to any component of the vaccine:
  - **Adacel®** - tetanus toxoid, diphtheria toxoid, acellular pertussis toxoid, aluminum phosphate, 2-phenoxyethanol, formaldehyde, glutaraldehyde (Does **not** contain latex.)
  - **Boostrix®** - tetanus toxoid, diphtheria toxoid, acellular pertussis toxoid, aluminum adjuvant, sodium chloride (**May contain latex**)
- Anyone under 4 years of age.
- Anyone with a high fever or moderate to severe illness should wait until they feel well.
- Anyone who has a
  - progressive or unstable neurological disorder (e.g. uncontrolled epilepsy)
  - history of Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of a tetanus vaccine
  - history of swelling on the brain within 7 days of receiving a pertussis vaccine

### What else do I need to know?

- To reduce the spread of germs, sneeze or cough into a tissue or into your elbow or upper sleeve, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 15 seconds.
- The *Immunization of School Pupils Act* requires all students between the ages of 4 to 17 to be immunized according to Ontario's Immunization Schedule, unless a valid Statement of Medical Exemption or Conscience or Religious Belief is on file with public health.

### When should I seek medical help after immunization?

- If you or your child experiences any unusual side effects, please seek medical attention and notify us.
- Go to Emergency at a hospital right away or call 911 if you or your child has any of the following symptoms after immunization:
  - swelling of the face and neck
  - problems breathing
  - hives and itchy, reddened skin

### Your Record of Protection

After you receive any immunization, make sure your health care provider updates your personal immunization record. Keep it in a safe place. Please inform us of any immunizations not received by public health.

**Other questions?** Talk to your health care provider or call our Immunization Program at 613-966-5500 | Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY: Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511)  
[www.hpepublichealth.ca](http://www.hpepublichealth.ca)

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