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Protection against tetanus, diphtheria and polio

The teenage booster vaccine boosts protection against three diseases: tetanus (T), diphtheria (d) and polio (IPV-inactivated polio vaccine). It's sometimes called Td/IPV.





This leaflet gives you information about the teenage booster vaccine offered to all young people at around 13 to 14 years of age and the diseases it protects against.

What is tetanus?

Tetanus is a painful, often fatal, disease affecting the nervous system, which can lead to muscle spasms and breathing problems. It is caused when germs found in soil and manure get into the body through an injury such as a cut or burn. Tetanus cannot be passed from person to person.

What is diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious disease that usually begins with a sore throat and can quickly cause breathing problems. It can damage the heart and nervous system, and in severe cases, can kill.

What is polio?

Polio is a virus that attacks the nervous system and can cause permanent paralysis of muscles. If it affects the chest muscles or the brain, polio can kill.

If I was immunised against tetanus, diphtheria and polio as a young child, do I still need the booster?

Yes. You may still have some protection but this falls over time and you need a booster to make it last longer.

How many boosters do I need?

The teenage booster is the last dose of Td/IPV that you will be offered routinely.

You should already have had:

- The first three doses as a baby.
- The fourth dose when you were around three years old.

Further doses may be required for certain jobs or travel.

If you think you have missed any of these doses, talk to your school nurse, doctor or practice nurse. It's not too late to get up to date.

When and where will I get the booster?

In most areas the Td/IPV vaccine is offered in school, in year 9 or 10. In a few areas it is only offered in the GP surgery.

What do I need to do?

If you receive a consent form at school make sure you and your parent or guardian read the information, sign it and return the form to school as soon as possible.

It's best to involve your parent or guardian, but in some circumstances you can give consent yourself if you fully understand what is being offered.

If you live in an area where the vaccine is not given in school you will be invited to your GP surgery.

Make sure you know where and when you need to attend.

How will I be given the booster?

The Td/IPV vaccine is a small injection that is given into your upper arm. If you are a bit nervous tell the person giving you the injection before you have it.

Are there any reasons why I should not have the booster?

You should not have the Td/IPV vaccine if you have had a severe reaction to any

ingredient or to a previous dose of a diphtheria, tetanus or polio vaccine. There are no other medical reasons why the vaccine should not be given.

What if I am ill on the day of the appointment?

If you have a minor illness without a fever, such as a cold, you should have the vaccination as planned.

If you are unwell with a high temperature you should delay the vaccination until your temperature has settled. This is to avoid the fever being associated with the vaccine, or the vaccine increasing the fever you already have. An appointment should be arranged as soon as possible after you recover.

I have a medical condition, what should I do?

If you are taking medication or have any medical problems including allergies, you should tell the person giving you the vaccine before you have it. This is particularly important if you have a bleeding disorder (where your blood doesn't clot properly) or a history of fits.

If you are in any doubt whether you should have the booster then speak to the person giving you the vaccine before you have it.



Are there any side effects?

Your arm may be sore with some redness and swelling where the injection was given. This may last a few days. Sometimes a small painless lump develops, but this usually disappears in a few weeks. Less common effects can include fever, headache, dizziness, feeling sick and swollen glands.

If you have a fever and feel unwell after the vaccination talk to your parent or guardian as taking paracetamol or ibuprofen may help.

If your temperature remains high, or you are worried, you should speak to your doctor, practice nurse, school nurse or contact NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647.

If you are under 16 you should not take medicines that contain aspirin.

I missed my vaccination, can I still have it?

Yes, speak to your school nurse or GP surgery about how to get the vaccine.

Are these the only immunisations I need to have now?

When you are having your Td/IPV vaccine you will be offered a booster vaccine against meningococcal group C disease (MenC) at the same time. It's also a good idea to check that all your other immunisations are up to date, for example MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine and if you are a girl the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine.

Where can I get more information?

Talk to your school nurse, practice nurse, doctor or NHS Direct Wales on **0845 4647**.

Alternatively you could follow the links below.

www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation or www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

A patient information leaflet which offers further information on the vaccine, including vaccine ingredients, is available from www.medicines.org.uk/emc/ by entering the name of the vaccine in the search box. The vaccine most commonly used for teenage booster vaccination is called Revaxis®.

Information on reporting suspected side effects can be found online at www.yellowcard.gov.uk or call the Yellow Card hotline on **0808 100 3352** (Monday to Friday 10.00 to 14.00).

Further information on consent in health care for young people is also available at: www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation

This leaflet is available to download from the Welsh Government immunisation website at www.wales.gov.uk/immunisation

Copies of this leaflet are available by e-mailing hplibrary@wales.nhs.uk or telephoning **0845 606 4050**

Questions about this leaflet can be addressed to:

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