

Your Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis Shot - Tdap

The **tetanus / diphtheria / pertussis** shot (**Tdap**) protects against three serious diseases.

Tetanus also known as 'lockjaw' is a serious disease. People with **Tetanus** usually have painful tightening of the jaw and neck muscles. As a result, they can't open their mouths or swallow.

Tetanus does not spread from person to person.

People get **tetanus** when their skin is cut or broken, especially if they are around dust, soil and manure.



Diphtheria is a very serious infection of the upper chest. The infection can lead to breathing problems, heart failure, paralysis and even death. A person who has **diphtheria** can give it to someone else by coughing. Today, hardly anyone in the U.S. gets **diphtheria** because almost everyone gets the vaccine (shot).

Pertussis (whooping cough) is an infection of the chest that causes people to cough very hard for a long time. Sometimes people cough so hard they break a rib. A person with whooping cough also has trouble breathing. Whooping cough can lead to pneumonia. Whooping cough spreads easily from one person to another.

The **Tdap** shot is the best way to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough. If you are between 19 – 64 years old, you should get the **Tdap** shot one time. When it's time for you to get your tetanus diphtheria booster shot, that's a good time to get the **Tdap** shot instead. Your provider may recommend **Tdap** as soon as 2 years from your last tetanus/diphtheria booster because **Tdap** also protects you against whooping cough.

After you get **Tdap** shot, your skin may be sore where the needle went in.