

Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP/Tdap) Vaccine

Vaccine Information Leaflet

What is the DTaP/Tdap Vaccine Used For?

DTaP/Tdap vaccines help to prevent diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis. Diphtheria and pertussis are infectious diseases which spread from one person to another through the air, via coughs or sneezes. Tetanus is not easily spread from person to person but is a serious disease affecting the nerves, and enters the body through cuts or wounds.

Diphtheria - Diphtheria bacteria causes breathing difficulties, problems with swallowing, heart failure, paralysis, and death.

Tetanus - Tetanus bacteria produce a toxin that causes “lockjaw” resulting in painful muscle contractions, which interferes with breathing and swallowing, leading to death.

Pertussis - Pertussis bacteria cause uncontrollable, violent coughing (“whooping cough”) which results in breathing difficulties, as well as problems in eating or drinking.

What Are the Types of DTaP/Tdap Vaccine Available?

There are two types of vaccines available, which differ in their diphtheria and pertussis content:

1. DTaP: Diphtheria, Tetanus, and acellular Pertussis
2. Tdap: Tetanus, reduced diphtheria and acellular pertussis content

Who Should Receive the DTaP/Tdap Vaccine?

As part of the Singapore National Childhood Immunisation Schedule (NCIS), all children should receive a series of 3 doses, followed by 2 booster doses:

Dose/Booster	Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3	Booster 1	Booster 2
Age	2 months	4 months	6 months	18 months	10-11 years
Vaccine Type	DTaP	DTaP	DTaP	DTaP	Tdap

Immunisation against diphtheria is compulsory by law. This vaccination is also required for enrolment into schools.

As part of the Singapore National Adult Immunisation Schedule (NAIS), the Tdap vaccine is recommended for adults with certain medical conditions, with no history of previous vaccination or if their last vaccination was at least 10 years ago. Consult your doctor for more details.

One dose of the Tdap vaccine is also recommended during 16 to 32 weeks of each pregnancy for protection of the infant against pertussis, regardless of the interval since the previous Tdap vaccination.

What Precautions Should I Follow Before Receiving the DTaP/Tdap Vaccine?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this vaccine or any of the other ingredients of this vaccine
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding
- You are taking any other medications
- You had an adverse reaction to the previous dose of the vaccination, especially involving the brain such as altered mental status, coma or fits (seizures)
- You have a history of fits (seizures)
- You are currently not feeling well and having a fever
- You have an history of bleeding disorders

How Is the DTaP/Tdap Vaccine Given?

It is given by injection into a muscle.

The DTaP/Tdap vaccine is a combination vaccine given as one shot.

It may be given on its own as one shot, or in combination with other vaccines (e.g. Hepatitis B, Hib, Polio, Varicella) as one shot.

What Are Some Common Side Effects of the DTaP/Tdap Vaccine?

- Some people may feel faint after the vaccination
 - Sit for 15 minutes after receiving the vaccine to avoid fainting
- Pain, redness and swelling at the injection site
 - You may place a cold compress over the affected area for relief
 - You may take paracetamol for pain relief
- Crying, irritability, restlessness, sleepiness in children
 - These side effects usually go away on its own
- Loss of appetite, diarrhoea, vomiting
 - These side effects usually go away on its own

Please see a doctor if these side effects do not get better or become worse.

What Are Some Rare But Serious Side Effects That I Need to Seek Medical Advice Immediately?

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should inform your healthcare professional immediately.

Disclaimers

The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.

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