

You and the Combined Acellular Pertussis, Tetanus and Diphtheria (dTap) Vaccine

Grade 9 students are offered the combined acellular Pertussis (whooping cough), Tetanus and Diphtheria vaccine to protect them against all of these bacterial infections.

Disease	What it Causes	Possible Complications
Diphtheria Infects nose and throat; spreads through direct contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart and nerve damage Respiratory problems High fever Severe sore throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paralysis Death (5 to 10% of cases)
Tetanus (Lockjaw) Bacteria is found in soil, dust and manure.	Severe muscle spasms in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the jaw vocal chords entire body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death (10% of cases)
Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Spreads easily from person to person by coughing and sneezing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent coughing spells Difficulty eating, breathing and sleeping (for up to many weeks) Babies under one year have to be hospitalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pneumonia Respiratory failure Heart and nerve damage Broken ribs, hernias, collapsed lung Brain damage Death (0.4% among babies)



Why consider the dTap vaccine?

Vaccination is the best protection against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. The dTap vaccine is very effective and very safe. In most cases, it causes no side effects and the potential complications of the diseases outweigh any possible side effects of the vaccine.

Possible Side Effects	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swelling and redness with or without tenderness around the injection site. A small bump may develop at the injection site that will disappear over the next few weeks. Fever (1% to 18% of cases), headaches and muscle pain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a cold, damp cloth to the injection site. Take fever medication such as acetaminophen if your temperature is 38.5°C or over.
<p><i>Severe allergic reactions are rare, begin immediately and can be treated by the person who gave the vaccine. You should remain on site for at least 15 minutes after vaccination so that an allergic reaction, if there is one, can be treated. On rare occasions, serious arm pain and weakness, which could last for several weeks, have been reported (0.5 to 1 case per 100,000 doses).</i></p>	

Consult your health care provider if side effects persist over 48 hours.
For more information on vaccinations, visit: <http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/>

