

# What you need to know about the tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough vaccination



Don't want to take this fact sheet with you? Take a photo instead! It's important to keep this information handy.

Whooping cough (caused by pertussis), tetanus, and diphtheria are three life-threatening diseases caused by bacterial infection. For people aged 11 years and older, the vaccine we use in New Zealand to prevent and protect against these diseases is called Boostrix. It is sometimes called a Tdap vaccine. Children are immunised for these diseases during childhood and should receive a free booster from when they are 11 years old.

Adults should also receive a booster during each pregnancy, one from 45 and one from 65 years old. Some people may also be offered an additional booster, for example after suffering a wound which is at high risk of tetanus infection.

<b>Tetanus</b>	Tetanus is a disease that is caused by bacteria that can enter the body through a cut or a graze. It causes muscles to stiffen or spasm. It may affect the breathing muscles. Tetanus is often fatal.
<b>Diphtheria</b>	Diphtheria affects the throat, making it hard to breathe and swallow. It may also affect the nerves, muscles, heart, skin and can be fatal.
<b>Whooping cough</b>	Whooping cough causes breathing difficulties and severe coughing fits. More than half of babies under 12 months old who catch it need to go to hospital, and up to 1 in 50 of these babies die.

## Please let your vaccinator know if you/ the person being vaccinated:

- have had a severe allergic reaction to any vaccine or medicine in the past
- have had a severe allergic reaction to anything in the past
- are on blood thinning medications or have a bleeding disorder
- are pregnant (can be given from 16 weeks of pregnancy).

## Giving consent for a vaccination

Before having your vaccine, the vaccinator will ask if you give consent. You have the right to make an informed choice about your healthcare including immunisations.

Before giving consent, the vaccinator will explain to you what the vaccine is for, the risks of having the vaccine, and why it is recommended for you. The vaccinator will explain what to expect after your vaccine and how and where to seek help if you have any concerns. You will receive this information verbally and take this fact sheet home. There will be time to have all your questions answered and you can also request an interpreter if you need one.

For more information about giving consent, visit [healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/i/informed-consent/](http://healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/i/informed-consent/)

## Recording vaccinations

Te Whatu Ora records vaccines administered on a centralised database. This allows your healthcare professional to access your vaccine history and will help keep you up to date with your vaccinations.

To understand how we protect your privacy when recording vaccinations visit [health.govt.nz/air](http://health.govt.nz/air)

## Are your whānau up to date with their vaccinations?

Check that you and your whānau are up to date with your vaccinations by talking with your healthcare provider.

All members of a whānau being fully vaccinated creates a bubble of protection around your pēpi (baby), tamariki, kaumātua (older people), and other vulnerable whānau.

Visit [immunise.health.nz/whanau](http://immunise.health.nz/whanau) for more information on what vaccines you and your whānau may be due.

# After the vaccination



Don't want to take this fact sheet with you? Take a photo instead! It's important to keep this information handy.

Some people experience mild reactions after a vaccination. This is the body's normal response to immunisation and shows the vaccine is working. These usually settle after a day or two.

How you may feel*	What can help
<b>Swelling and pain at the injection site</b> (hard and sore to touch) <b>Heavy arm</b>	Place a cold wet cloth or icepack at the injection site. Leave it on for a short time. Do not rub the injection site.
<b>Feeling unwell or tired</b> <b>A fever or aching muscles</b>	Rest and drink plenty of fluids. Paracetamol and ibuprofen, only take them for relief of significant discomfort or high fever. Follow the manufacturer's instructions or seek advice from your healthcare provider or call Healthline on <b>0800 611 116</b> for advice.

\*These symptoms may not be related to the vaccine and could be signs of an unrelated illness, see below for advice on seeking help.

## Rare side effects

The chance of having a serious allergic reaction from the Boostrix vaccine is extremely rare and would happen within **20 minutes** of being immunised. That's why you'll be asked to stay for 20 minutes after you have the Boostrix vaccine. Vaccinators are trained to manage these reactions if they occur and have the equipment for this.

Your vaccinator will talk about possible reactions with you at the time of your immunisation.

## Reporting side effects

It's important you report any reactions you or your child has following their Boostrix vaccination so we can keep tracking the safety of the vaccine.

You can report any side effects, you or your child experiences at [nzphvc.otago.ac.nz/report/](https://nzphvc.otago.ac.nz/report/) or talk to your healthcare provider if you wish to discuss reporting side effects. You don't need to be certain that the vaccine caused the reaction to submit a report.



If you have any concerns about your symptoms after your vaccine, talk to your doctor or practice nurse, or call healthline on **0800 611 116** anytime to get advice.

If you have immediate concerns about your safety, call **111** and make sure you tell them you have had a Boostrix vaccination.

## Other vaccines you can book now:

---

---

---

**Ask your vaccinator how to book your next appointment**

For more information on immunisation visit [immunise.health.nz](https://immunise.health.nz)