

## DTaP/Tdap/Td or Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis Vaccine

### Why get vaccinated?

Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis are serious diseases caused by bacteria. Diphtheria and pertussis are spread from person to person. Tetanus enters the body through cuts or wounds.

**Diphtheria** causes a thick covering in the back of the throat.

- It can lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure, and even death.

**Tetanus** (Lockjaw) causes painful tightening of the muscles, usually all over the body.

- It can lead to "locking" of the jaw so the victim cannot open his mouth or swallow. Tetanus leads to death in about 2 out of 10 cases.

**Pertussis** (Whooping Cough) causes coughing spells so bad that it is hard for infants to eat, drink, or breathe. These spells can last for weeks.

- It can lead to pneumonia, seizures (jerking and staring spells), brain damage, and death.

Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis vaccine (DTaP) can help prevent these diseases. Most children who are vaccinated with DTaP will be protected throughout childhood. Many more children would get these diseases if we stopped vaccinating.

DTaP is a safer version of an older vaccine called DTP. DTP is no longer used in the United States.

### Who should get DTaP vaccine and when?

**Children** should get 5 doses of DTaP vaccine, one dose at each of the following ages:

- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 15 to 18 months
- 4 to 6 years
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DTaP may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

### Older children and adults:

A vaccine called **Tdap** is similar to DTaP. A single dose of Tdap is recommended for people 11 through 64 years of age. Another vaccine, called **Td**, protects against tetanus and diphtheria, but not pertussis. It is recommended every 10 years.

<http://www.aap.org/immunization/illnesses/dtp/diphtheria.html>

<http://www.aap.org/immunization/illnesses/dtp/tetanus.html>

<http://www.aap.org/immunization/illnesses/dtp/pertussis.html>

<http://www.immunize.org/vis/dtap01.pdf>

[http://www.immunize.org/vis/td\\_tdap.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/vis/td_tdap.pdf)