

Do you know how important the tetanus vaccine?

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Introduction

Everyone has experienced muscle cramps and the occasional cramps and other unexplained pains that come with it. Now, imagine every single muscle in your body undergoing cramp for weeks, sometimes with enough force to break a bone and pull a tendon from its original place! If you don't get treatment right away, it can be fatal!

The first case of tetanus returns after 30 years

In 2017, a 6-year-old boy who did not receive immunizations suffered an injury to his forehead as a result of falling while playing on a farm, and was treated at home. 6 days later, he experienced difficulty breathing, jaw cramps, and uncontrollable muscle spasms, followed by a curved neck and back (opisthotonus) and a spastic physical condition. The child received a diagnosis of tetanus and needed care for about 8 weeks, followed by rehabilitation treatment, before he could resume normal activities! Upon arrival at the hospital, the child experienced a jaw muscle spasm (trismus). He was however still conscious and asked for water but could not open his mouth. She was admitted to the paediatric intensive care unit and cared for in a dark room wearing ear plugs and minimal stimulation as any type of stimulation could further increase the risk of seizures occurring.

The child required 57 days of acute inpatient care

We A month after undergoing treatment, the child returned to all normal activities, including walking and cycling. Yet despite being risky and being told about the benefits of tetanus vaccination by a doctor, the child's family still refused to get a second dose of DTaP and any of the recommended immunizations!

Is it tetanus?

Tetanus caries is an acute neuromuscular disease caused by the bacterium *Clostridium tetani* found in soil, dust and animal faeces. Bacterial spores found in soil can enter the body through skin disorders, and become bacteria that can produce a powerful toxin, tetanospasmin. These toxins damage the nerves that control your muscles (motor neurons), causing cramps and muscle spasms - which range from 3 to 21 days (usually within 8 days). It is a serious disease that affects your nervous system,

leading to painful muscle contractions, especially the jaw and neck muscles. Tetanus can interfere with your ability to breathe and can be life threatening. Almost all cases of tetanus occur in people who have never been given the tetanus vaccine or in adults who have not updated their immunizations within 10 years. The disease is not contagious.



Symptoms of tetanus

Symptoms of tetanus appear at any time from a few days to a few weeks after the tetanus bacteria enter your body through a wound.

Common signs and symptoms of tetanus include:

- Cramps in your jaw muscles (trismus).
- Your neck muscle cramps.
- Difficulty swallowing.
- Tension of your abdominal muscles.
- Painful body stings last for several minutes, usually triggered by small events, such as drafts, loud noises, physical touch or light.
- Other signs include fever, sweating, increased blood pressure and a rapid pulse rate.

Prevention can be done by getting the tetanus vaccine

The DTaP vaccine is a series of 5 series of immunizations, which provide protection against Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis. It is usually injected in the arms or thighs of children between the ages of 2 months to 6 years. Tetanus vaccine boosters are usually given in combination with diphtheria (Td) vac-

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cine boosters. In 2005, the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine was approved for use in adolescents and adults under the age of 65 to ensure continued protection against pertussis. If you are traveling internationally, especially to developing countries where tetanus may be common, make sure your immunity is always updated. Ask your doctor to check the status of your vaccine regularly to avoid the risk of a dangerous disease attack. If you were not vaccinated against tetanus as a child, consult your doctor to get the DTaP vaccine right away. The DTaP vaccine is a series of 5 series of immunizations, which

provide protection against Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis. It is usually injected in the arms or thighs of children between the ages of 2 months to 6 years. Tetanus vaccine boosters are usually given in combination with diphtheria (Td) vaccine boosters. In 2005, the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine was approved for use in adolescents and adults under the age of 65 to ensure continued protection against pertussis as well.