

## **PATIENT INFORMATION – TETANUS IMMUNISATION INCLUDING DIPHTHERIA AND POLIO**

### **What is tetanus?**

Tetanus is a serious but rare infection caused by bacteria. It usually happens when a flesh wound becomes contaminated with different substances including soil, house dust and animal and human waste, such as manure. It disrupts the normal workings of the nerves, causing symptoms such as stiffness and muscle spasms. If it is not treated, tetanus may lead to complications, which can be fatal.

### **The tetanus vaccination/immunisation**

A full course of tetanus vaccination consists of five doses of the vaccine. This should be enough to give you long-term protection from tetanus. However, if you're not sure how many doses you've received, you may need a booster dose after an injury that breaks your skin.

If you've definitely received five doses of the tetanus vaccine, you are fully vaccinated and don't need a booster dose.

You have been given a tetanus booster today which is a combined vaccine of:

- tetanus, diphtheria/inactivated polio vaccine (Td/IPV)

### **Side effects**

Minor side effects are quite common, usually being soreness at the site of the injection with some redness. This should only last a day or so and is unlikely to be larger than the size of a 50p coin. You may also feel unwell for a day or so, with a mild headache, slight aching of the muscles and a mild temperature/fever. If you are concerned or have a

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very strong reaction you should seek advice from your GP. It is quite safe to take \*paracetamol if the soreness bothers you.

Let your GP know that you have had the vaccination so they can make a note of it in your records.

### Local Services

The NHS Direct Wales website allows you to search for local services in your area, such as Pharmacy and Sexual Health Clinics. Choose the service you require and follow the guidance on how to search.

[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/)



If you become unwell or are injured, choose the right NHS service to make sure you get the best treatment. The Choose Well campaign explains what each NHS service does, and when it should be used.

Choosing well means that you and your family will get the best treatment. It also allows busy NHS services to help the people who need them most.

If you are unsure about which option to choose, please call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or visit the Choose Well website at

[www.choosewellwales.org.uk](http://www.choosewellwales.org.uk)

This information has been produced based on previous information leaflets and the evidence available at the time of publication. It has been clinically reviewed however if you notice anything that needs updating or amending please contact

[ppi.team@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ppi.team@wales.nhs.uk)

If you require this information in another language or format please ask a member of staff.

For further advice or information contact NHS Direct Wales 0845 46 47

[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)