

How safe is the vaccine?

The vaccine is very safe for your child.

As with all vaccines, some people may have a reaction. These are usually mild and quickly disappear, and can include:

- ✓ pain, redness or swelling at the injection site
- ✓ mild temperature (below 38°C)
- ✓ headache
- ✓ nausea, generally feeling unwell
- ✓ muscle aches and joint pain
- ✓ tiredness.

Serious side effects from the vaccine are extremely rare. If you are worried about your child's reaction, seek medical advice.



How can I find more details about my child's immunisation history?

The Australian Immunisation Register keeps a record of vaccinations given in Australia. Immunisation history statements can be accessed at any time by using your Medicare online account through myGov (my.gov.au).

Where can I get more information?

- ✓ Speak to your GP or other immunisation provider.
- ✓ Visit health.gov.au/immunisation



You can learn more about the safety of dTpa vaccines at the Therapeutic Goods Administration website

tga.gov.au

Adolescent 'booster' dose of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (dTpa) vaccine

Preventing serious diseases by vaccination and protecting the community.



health.gov.au/immunisation



Why get vaccinated?

By your child getting vaccinated, it protects them and also protects the broader community from diphtheria and whooping cough, and particularly vulnerable people such as babies who are too young to be vaccinated, by helping to limit the spread of these diseases. The more people who are vaccinated in your community, the less likely the disease will spread.

Your child is likely to have received vaccination against diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis at their last childhood immunisation, around the age of four years. The adolescent dose of the dTpa vaccine is offered as part of the secondary school-based program, and is an additional **booster dose to maintain effective immunity** into early adulthood.

What are these diseases?

Diphtheria is a rare but serious infectious disease. The bacteria usually causes infection of the mouth, throat and nose but it can also cause skin infections. It is spread by an infected person's coughing and sneezing, or direct contact with infected wounds or contaminated objects/articles. It is a potentially life-threatening disease that can cause severe breathing difficulties, heart failure and nerve damage.

Tetanus is caused when bacteria that are found in soil, dust and manure, enter the body through a break in the skin such as through either a cut or graze. Tetanus does not spread from person to person, so you cannot catch tetanus from someone else. Tetanus causes severe and painful muscle spasms, convulsions and lockjaw.

Pertussis is more commonly known as whooping cough, and is a highly contagious respiratory disease. It is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. In adolescents and adults, symptoms can vary from mild cold-like symptoms to a severe persistent cough. Complications from pertussis can include pneumonia, seizures and rib fractures.

How do you get vaccinated?

The vaccine is provided free to adolescents in years 7 or 8 of secondary school (aged about 12–13 years) depending on the state or territory you live in, through school-based immunisation programs.

These students will receive a consent form from their school, which must be signed by either a parent or legal guardian and returned to the school before the vaccine is administered.

How effective is the vaccine?

The dTpa vaccine is a safe and effective way to help protect adolescents from diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. Fully vaccinated adolescents will be protected for many years, but may require a booster dose in the future for protection against pertussis or if an injury places them at risk of tetanus.

Where can I get more information?

- ✓ Speak to your GP or other immunisation provider.
- ✓ [health.gov.au/immunisation](https://www.health.gov.au/immunisation)