

## Emergency Department Tetanus & Diphtheria Vaccine

You have received a booster shot today \_\_\_\_\_ that will update your immunization against Tetanus and Diphtheria.

### General Information

#### Tetanus

Tetanus, also known as “lockjaw”, is a serious disease caused by the Tetanus bacteria, which lives in dirt. If you get a cut that gets infected with the Tetanus bacteria you may get Tetanus. Tetanus can result in severe muscle paralysis (loss of ability to move). If the breathing muscles become affected, death may result. The only way to prevent tetanus is by immunization.

#### Diphtheria

Diphtheria is a serious infection that affects the nose and throat. The bacteria that cause Diphtheria are spread through the air by people who have Diphtheria sneezing or coughing or by direct skin to skin contact. Diphtheria can cause heart failure, paralysis and breathing problems, death can result. The only way to prevent Diphtheria is by immunization.

Make sure that you and your family are up to date with your immunizations. The basic Tetanus and Diphtheria immunization consists of a series of three injections (shots), usually received in childhood. A booster shot is needed every ten years to provide adequate protection. Doctors may suggest a booster shot in less than ten years if you have a cut or puncture wound that is dirty and may contain the tetanus bacteria.

### Common reactions to the vaccine include:

- Soreness, redness and swelling around the injection site.
- A painful or stiff arm.
- Fever.

### Instructions

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil) can be taken for fever or soreness.

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**Contact your Family Doctor if any of the following develop:**

- The common reactions described above are not relieved by Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil), or if they last for more than 48 hours.
- Oozing from the injection site.

**Return to Emergency if any of the following develop:**

- Signs of an allergic reaction such as a rash, swelling or itching of the face, tongue, throat, lips, or trouble breathing.
- Burning, numbness or tingling of the hands or feet.

**For more information or questions contact HealthLinkBC at 811.**

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