

# Communicable Diseases

## Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio Vaccine (DTaP-IPV)

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Vaccines (also called “needles” or “baby shots”) are the best way to protect against some very serious infections. The Canadian Paediatric Society and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization strongly recommend routine immunization.

DTaP-IPV, also known as **Quadracel**, is a four-in-one needle. It protects children against pertussis, diphtheria, tetanus, and polio. The law requires vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus and polio for all children attending daycare or school in Ontario (unless exempted).

### What is Diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious disease of the nose, throat and skin. It causes sore throat, fever and chills. It can also cause breathing problems, heart failure and nerve damage. Diphtheria kills one out of every 10 people who get the disease. It is passed to others through coughing and sneezing.

### What is Tetanus?

Tetanus (or lockjaw) is a serious disease that can happen if dirt with the tetanus germ gets into a cut in the skin. Tetanus germs are found everywhere, usually in soil, dust, and manure. If you have a cut infected with the tetanus germ, you may get tetanus. It does not spread from person to person. The bacteria in the wound make a poison. The poison causes cramping of the muscles in the neck, arms, leg, and stomach, and painful convulsions that can be severe enough to break bones. Even with early treatment, tetanus kills two out of every 10 people who get it.

### What is Pertussis?

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a serious disease, especially in children. Children who get this disease have violent coughing. This cough can cause them to vomit or briefly stop breathing. The cough can last for weeks and make it hard for a child to eat, drink or even breathe. Pertussis can cause serious complications, like pneumonia, convulsions, brain damage – even death. Pertussis spreads very easily through coughing or sneezing. While pertussis vaccine has been used in Canada for about 50 years, the newest type of vaccine has fewer side effects and offers better protection against the disease.

### What is Polio?

Polio is a dangerous disease that people can get from drinking water or eating food with the polio germ in it. It can also be spread from person to person. This disease can cause nerve damage and paralyze a person for life. It can paralyze muscles used for breathing, talking, eating, and walking. It can also cause death.

### At what age should my child be vaccinated with the DTaP-IPV vaccine?

Children are routinely immunized with DTaP-IPV between four and six years of age, before starting school. This vaccine may be given with other vaccines at separate sites using separate needles. If your child misses a needle, you should get the next needle as soon as possible. This vaccine is not given to children over seven years of age. Your family health care provider will tell you when to return for future needles.

### How well does DTaP-IPV vaccine protect my child?

When DTaP-IPV vaccine is given in the recommended number of shots, it protects the vast majority of children against pertussis, diphtheria, tetanus, and polio. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may catch them.

### Is the DTaP-IPV vaccine safe?

Yes. Serious side effects are rare. Mild pain, swelling and redness for a few days are common at the spot where the needle was given.

Some children get a fever, rash, lose their appetite, or are fussy or drowsy for a day or two after the vaccination. Your family health care provider may suggest you give your child a medicine called acetaminophen to prevent pain and fever.

**Call your family health care provider or local hospital if your child has any of the following within three days of getting the needle:**

- high fever (over 40°C or 104°F)
- crying for more than three hours
- convulsions or seizures
- very pale color and serious drowsiness
- hives (itchy rash)
- swelling of the face or mouth
- trouble breathing
- other serious problems

### **Who should not get the DTaP-IPV vaccine?**

Your family health care provider may decide not to give your child's needle or may give a different vaccine if your child has:

- a high fever or serious infection worse than a cold
- had an allergic reaction to a previous dose of Quadracel, Pediacel, Pentacel or any other product containing pertussis, diphtheria, tetanus, or polio
- a severe allergy to any parts of the vaccine such as: neomycin, polymyxin B, bovine serum, latex, 2-phenoxyethanol, aluminum, formaldehyde, or polysorbate
- religious or philosophical objections to any part of the vaccine
- anyone seven years of age or older
- anyone who developed Guillain-Barre Syndrome within eight weeks of a previous dose of a vaccine containing tetanus

### **Whom should I talk to if I have any more questions about the DTaP-IPV vaccine?**

Talk to your family health care provider or the Huron County Health Unit (519-482-3416) for more information.

### **Your Record of Protection**

After your child receives any immunization, make sure the doctor updates the yellow personal Immunization Record card. Keep it in a safe place!