

Patient information

Diphtheria Tetanus and Poliomyelitis (Inactivated) Single Dose Vaccine

Emergency Care – Royal Liverpool Hospital

This is a combined vaccination and immunisation, which has been designed following advice from the Joint Council for Vaccination and Immunisations. This council is concerned at the low levels of immunity to diphtheria in older people, and is in line with recommendations from the World Health Organisation.

This vaccination will also protect you against Tetanus (also known as “lockjaw”). It lasts for ten years but does not protect you against any other infections. Polio is an infectious disease that is usually caught by swallowing polioviruses in food or drink. It can also be caught by eating with unwashed hands if there is virus on them. The virus is spread to the nervous system and can cause permanent paralysis.

Why do I need this injection?

Tetanus is a serious infection that affects the nerves and is often fatal. Tetanus bacteria (germ) live in the soil and dirt. The bacteria may get into your body through a cut or a wound in your skin. The bacteria may make a toxin (poison), which causes the Tetanus illness. Even small wounds such as a prick from a thorn can allow enough bacteria to get into the body to cause tetanus.

What will happen if I refuse the injection?

If you do not have the injection, there is a possibility that you may develop Tetanus and become seriously ill. A senior Doctor in the Emergency Department (A&E) will discuss this with you.

Are there any alternative treatments available?

There is no alternative treatment available.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

The drug Revaxis should not be given to pregnant women unless the situation is considered urgent. It can be given to women who are breastfeeding.

Driving or using machinery

Dizziness has been reported after vaccination so you should take care if driving or operating machinery.

What are the risks?

Please discuss possible side effects with the doctor or nurse treating you. It is common to get a little redness and swelling around the injection site which goes after a few days. Some people feel slightly unwell for a day or so with a mild headache, slight aching of the muscles, and a mild fever. Some people get reactions to the injection if they have more than the recommended number, or have a dose of vaccine too early.

If you think your wound is becoming infected, please come back to the A&E department without delay.

The signs of wound infection are:

- Pain.
- Redness.
- Swelling.
- Warmth.
- Discharge or “weeping”.

If the doctor has prescribed antibiotics for you, you must take these as well as having the injection.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

The Royal Liverpool Hospital

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