Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau
Vaccination saves lives



Protection against tetanus, diphtheria and polio

GIG CYMRU NHS WALES
Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru
Public Health Wales

This leaflet is for young people and their parents or guardians. It explains the vaccination that is offered at around 13 to 14 years of age (school year 9) to provide protection against tetanus, diphtheria and polio. This vaccine is sometimes called the Td/IPV, or 3-in-1 teenage booster.

What is tetanus?

Tetanus is a painful disease affecting the nervous system. It can lead to muscle spasms and breathing problems and can kill. Tetanus is caused, for example, when germs found in soil and manure get into the body through open cuts or burns. Tetanus cannot be passed from person to person.

What is diphtheria?

Diphtheria is a serious disease that usually begins with a sore throat and can quickly cause breathing problems. It can damage the heart and nervous system, and in severe cases it can kill.

What is polio?

Polio is a virus that attacks the nervous system and can cause permanent paralysis of muscles. If it affects the chest muscles or the brain, it can kill.

If I was vaccinated against tetanus, diphtheria and polio as a child, am I still protected?

Yes. You will have some protection, but you need this booster to complete your routine vaccinations and to give you longer-term protection.

How many doses do I need to make sure I am protected?

You need five doses of tetanus, diphtheria and polio vaccines to build up and keep your immunity.

You should have had:



the first three doses as a baby



the fourth dose at around three to four years old (before you started school)



the fifth dose at around 13 to 14 years old (school year 9)

You may need more doses for certain jobs or travel.

If you think you have missed any of the routine doses, speak to your nurse or doctor.

It will still be important to know the signs and symptoms of tetanus, diphtheria and polio even if you are vaccinated because no vaccine is 100% effective. Information about signs and symptoms is available at **111.wales.nhs.uk** (external site).

It's not too late to get up to date.

When and where will I get the booster?

In most areas of Wales, the 3-in-1 teenage booster is routinely offered in school year 9. In a few areas, where the vaccine is not given in school, you will be invited to have it at your GP surgery.

Young people who are not in school or who are educated at home can make an appointment to have the vaccine from their GP surgery when it is due.

What do I need to do?

If you receive a consent form from school, make sure you and your parent or guardian read the information, fill in the form and return it as soon as possible.

It's best to involve your parent or guardian in your decision about having the vaccine, but in some circumstances you can give permission yourself if you fully understand what is being offered.

How will I be given the vaccine?

This vaccine is given as an injection in your upper arm, at the same time as the MenACWY vaccine that helps to protect against meningitis and septicaemia. If you are a bit nervous about having injections, tell the nurse or doctor.

Are there any other vaccinations I need to have now?

The 3-in-1 teenage booster and MenACWY vaccines are likely to be the last of your childhood vaccines. It's a good idea to check with the person giving you the injections that all your other vaccinations, for example, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), are up to date. If you have never had the MMR vaccine, you should have one dose now and another a month later.



Are there any reasons why I should not be vaccinated?

There are very few teenagers who cannot have the 3-in-1 booster. You should not have the vaccine if you have had a severe (life-threatening) reaction to any ingredient of the vaccine or to a previous dose of diphtheria, tetanus or polio vaccine.

What if I am ill on the day of the appointment?

If you have a minor illness without a fever, such as a cold, you should still have the vaccination. If you are ill with a fever, put the vaccination off until you are better.

Also, speak to your doctor or nurse before having the vaccination if you have a bleeding disorder.



Are there any side effects?

Your arm may be sore with some swelling, redness or tenderness where you have had the injection. Sometimes a small painless lump develops, but this usually disappears within a few weeks. More serious effects are rare but can include fever, headache, dizziness, feeling sick and swollen glands.

If you have a fever and feel unwell after the vaccination, take paracetamol or ibuprofen. Read the instructions on the bottle or packet carefully and take the correct dose for your age.

It is not recommended that you take these medicines before or after the vaccination just because you think you might get a fever.

Remember, don't take medicines that contain aspirin if you are under 16 years old.

Very rarely, some people have an allergic reaction soon after the vaccination. This may be a rash or itching affecting part or all of the body.

Even more rarely, some people can have a severe reaction soon after the vaccination, which causes breathing difficulties and may cause them to collapse. This is called an anaphylactic reaction and can happen with other medicines and food. These reactions are extremely rare and nurses are trained to manage them. People who have an anaphylactic reaction can be successfully treated and generally recover within a few hours.

Further information

If you have any questions or want more information, you can go to **111.wales.nhs.uk** (external site), talk to your doctor or nurse, or contact NHS 111 Wales by calling **111**.

You can find more information on vaccines offered in Wales at **phw.nhs.wales/vaccines**

To find out more about the vaccine, including its contents and possible side effects, go to **medicines.org.uk/emc** (external site). You will need to enter the name of the vaccine in the search box. You can also see the patient leaflet online.

You can report suspected side effects online at **www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard** (external site) or by downloading the Yellow Card app or calling **0800 731 6789** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

To find out how the NHS uses your information, visit **111.wales.nhs.uk/AboutUs/Yourinformation** (external site)

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