

Pertussis, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (cPDT Polio) Vaccine (QUADRACEL)

Vaccines are the best way to protect against very serious infections. The Canadian Paediatric Society and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization strongly recommends routine immunization.

cPDT Polio (brand name Quadracel) is a four-in-one needle. It protects children against pertussis, diphtheria, tetanus, and polio. It is recommended for use in infants and children younger than 7 years. Vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus, and polio is required by law for all children attending school in Ontario (unless exempted).

What is Pertussis?

Pertussis is commonly known as whooping cough, and is a serious disease, especially in children. Children who get this disease have spells of violent coughing which can cause them to vomit or stop breathing for a short period of time. The cough can last for weeks and make it hard for a child to eat, drink, or even breathe. Pertussis can cause serious complications. Pneumonia can occur in more than two out of ten children with pertussis. It can also cause brain damage and death. These problems happen most often in babies. Pertussis spreads very easily from an infected person to others through coughing or sneezing.

What is Diphtheria?

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

What is Tetanus?

Tetanus is commonly known as lockjaw, and 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, or manure. It does not spread from person to person. Tetanus causes cramping of the muscles in the neck, arms, legs, and stomach, and painful convulsions which can be severe enough to break bones. Even with early treatment, tetanus kills two out of every ten people who get it.

What is Polio?

Polio is a dangerous disease that people can get from drinking water or eating food with the polio germ in it. 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.

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How well does cPDT Polio Vaccine protect my child?

When cPDT Polio vaccine is given in the recommended number of shots, it protects 85 percent of children against pertussis, over 85 percent of children against diphtheria, and 95 percent of children against tetanus and 99 percent of children against polio. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may catch them.

At what age should my child be vaccinated with the cPDT Polio Vaccine?

cPDT Polio vaccine is given before starting kindergarten or school, when your child is 4-6 years old. Before that your child should have received four needles of the cPDT Polio + Hib (five-in-one) vaccine at 2, 4, 6, and 18 months.

A booster needle against tetanus, diphtheria and polio is given around the 15th birthday. After this needle, booster doses against tetanus and diphtheria are required every 10 years for continued protection.

What if my child misses this needle?

Your child should get the needle as soon as possible. cPDT Polio is not given to children older than 7 years of age and only tetanus, diphtheria, and polio (Td Polio) needle will be given. Your doctor will advise you which needles to get and when to come back for the other needles.

Is the cPDT Polio 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 needle. Your doctor may suggest that you give your child a medicine called acetaminophen to prevent pain and fever.

An extremely rare side effect, which occurred in about one out of every one million children who received the pertussis vaccine used before July 1997, (called "whole cell" pertussis vaccine), was encephalopathy. Encephalopathy, (irritation of the brain or the covering of the brain), results in a range of symptoms which may include headaches, stiff neck, changes in behaviour, confusion or irritability, or speech disturbances. Those who had this side effect recovered completely, in a short period of time, with no permanent damage.

This newer vaccine (component pertussis vaccine cP) causes even fewer of the minor reactions and chances of brain irritation following this vaccine remain extremely rare. The benefits of this vaccine are much greater than the risks.

There is no risk of a pregnant woman or anyone else catching any disease from a child who has been vaccinated recently.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor 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 colour and serious drowsiness,
- hives,
- swelling of the face or mouth,
- trouble breathing, or
- other serious problems.

Who should NOT get the cPDT Polio Vaccine?

The doctor 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,
- a severe allergy to an antibiotic called neomycin or polymyxin B,
- a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to cPDT Polio + Hib vaccine, or
- a severe allergy to any component of the vaccine.

Who should I talk to if I have any more questions about the cPDT Polio Vaccine?

Talk to your doctor or call KFL&A Public Health for more information.

Your record of protection

After your child receives any immunization, make sure the doctor updates your personal immunization record such as the "Yellow Card". Keep it in a safe place.

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