

Standing Order for Administration of Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td) or Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine to Adults

POLICY:

Under this standing order, medical assistants and RNs with proper training may provide Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td) or Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap) vaccinations to clients 18 years and older who meet criteria below.

PURPOSE:

Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis can be very serious diseases. All three diseases are caused by bacteria. Tetanus is an infection of the nervous system which can cause muscle spasms. Without timely treatment, approximately 2 out of 10 people who get tetanus will die from it. Diphtheria can cause a thick membrane and can hamper breathing. Pertussis (also known as whooping cough) causes severe coughing which can lead to difficulty breathing, vomiting, and poor sleep. Infants (less than 1 year old) have greatest risk for pertussis and are at most risk for serious complications, including death.

Vaccinations have dramatically reduced the number of cases of tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis in the United States since vaccines for these diseases were developed in the 1920s and 40s. Your body does not build immunity to tetanus so revaccination is important.

PROCEDURE:

1. Identify adults in need of Td or Tdap vaccination based on the following criteria:
 - a. All adults age 19 and older who have never been vaccinated for tetanus will require the primary series of vaccination (3 shots at 0, 1, and 6 months); one dose should be Tdap.
 - b. Adults 19 and older who received primary series and documentation of Tdap need a Td booster every 10 years.
 - c. Adults 19 and older, if previous Td recorded, but no documentation of Tdap, administer Tdap immediately a (no minimum interval between Td and the subsequent Tdap).
 - d. Recent deep and dirty wound and no Td or Tdap in past 5 years? Administer Td or Tdap according to above criteria.
 - e. For pregnant women with no documentation of Tdap: give Tdap after 20 weeks gestation or immediately postpartum.

2. Screen for contraindications and precautions to Td and Tdap vaccine:
 - a. Those with life-threatening or severe allergic reaction after a dose of any tetanus, diphtheria, or pertussis containing vaccine should not get Td or Tdap.
 - b. Anyone who had a coma or multiple seizures within 7 days after a dose of DTP or DTaP should not get Tdap, unless a cause other than the vaccine was found. These people may get Td.

