

1 Tetanus

Please note that tetanus immunoglobulin (TIG) is **not** available from the Health Protection Agency

Dosage

Currently only tetanus immunoglobulin for IM use is available from BPL (020 8258 2200 - 24 hours). No product suitable for iv use will be available for the foreseeable future.

For prophylaxis

IM for tetanus prone wounds (licensed):

250 units for most uses

500 units if more than 24 hours have elapsed or there is risk of heavy contamination or following burns.

Available in 1ml ampoules containing 250 units

For treatment of clinical tetanus

IM: 150units/kg of intramuscular preparation may be given in multiple sites (Note: the IM preparation should NOT be given IV).

Indications

Tetanus Immunisation Following Injuries

| Immunisation Status | Clean Wound | Tetanus Prone Wound (see definition below) | |
|--|---|---|---|
| | Vaccine | Vaccine | Human tetanus immunoglobulin# |
| Fully immunised i.e. has received a total of 5 doses of tetanus vaccine at appropriate intervals | None required | None required | Only if high risk |
| Primary immunisation complete, boosters incomplete but up to date | None required (unless next dose due soon and convenient to give now) | None required (unless next dose due soon and convenient to give now) | Only if high risk |
| Primary immunisation incomplete or boosters not up to date | A reinforcing dose of vaccine and further doses as required to complete the recommended schedule (to ensure future immunity) | A reinforcing dose of vaccine and further doses as required to complete the recommended schedule (to ensure future immunity) | Yes: one dose of human tetanus immunoglobulin in a different site |
| Not immunised or immunisation status not known or uncertain | An immediate dose of vaccine followed, if records confirm this is needed, by completion of a full 5 dose course to ensure future immunity | An immediate dose of vaccine followed, if records confirm this is needed, by completion of a full 5 dose course to ensure future immunity | Yes: one dose of human tetanus immunoglobulin in a different site |

where IM tetanus immunoglobulin is in short supply, consider the use of a tetanus-containing vaccine and antimicrobial treatment or prophylaxis

Notes

1. Adults and adolescents (over 10y of age) requiring tetanus immunisation should receive combined adsorbed tetanus/low dose diphtheria/inactivated polio vaccine for adults and adolescents (Td/IPV).

Tetanus vaccine is not considered adequate for treating a tetanus-prone wound since tetanus vaccine given at the time of a tetanus-prone injury may not boost immunity early enough to give additional protection within the incubation period of tetanus. However, giving a dose of vaccine at the time of injury provides the opportunity to ensure that the individual is protected against future exposure.

2. A full course of tetanus and diphtheria vaccines consists of 5 doses as follows:

| SCHEDULE | CHILDREN | ADULTS |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Primary Course | 3 doses of vaccine (usually as DTaP) at 2, 3 and 4 months of age | 3 doses of vaccine (as Td) each one month apart |
| 4th dose | At least 3 years after the primary course, usually pre-school entry (as DTaP) | 10 years after primary course (as Td) |
| 5th dose | Aged 13-18 years before leaving school (as Td/IPV) | 10 years after 4th dose (as Td) |

3. A tetanus prone wound is defined as:

- Any wound or burn sustained more than six hours before surgical treatment of the wound or burn.
- Any wound or burn at any interval after injury that shows one or more of the following characteristics:
 - i. A significant degree of devitalised tissue
 - ii. Puncture-type wound
 - iii. Contact with soil or manure likely to harbour tetanus organisms
 - iv. Clinical evidence of sepsis

4. Patients who are immunosuppressed may not be adequately protected against tetanus, despite having been fully immunised. They should be managed as if they were incompletely immunised.

For further details for usage see the Department of Health “Immunisation against Infectious Disease” (Green book) available at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/GreenBook/fs/en>