

**Date of vaccine:**

.....

**Name of vaccine and dose:**

.....

**Batch number:**

.....

**Site of vaccination:**

.....

Leaflet given

**For further advice please contact:**

Abingdon MIU	01865 903 476
Henley MIU	01865 903 755
Witney MIU	01865 903 841
Wallingford FAU	01865 903 471
Bicester FAU	01865 903 976

*MIU: minor injury unit  
FAU: first aid unit*

## Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times. However, if you have any concerns, complaints or comments about your experience of our service then please tell a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on freephone 0800 328 7971.

If you need the information in another language or format please ask us

Nëse ky informacion ju nevojitet në një gjuhë apo format tjetër, ju lutem na kontaktoni

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This service is part of our Older People Directorate.

OP 152.15



Urgent care

# Tetanus

## What is tetanus?

Tetanus, also known as lockjaw, is a bacterial disease that affects the nervous system. It is contracted through a cut or a wound that becomes contaminated with the tetanus bacteria.

The bacteria can get through a pinprick or small cut. Deep puncture wounds or cuts are especially susceptible to infection with tetanus.

Tetanus bacteria are present worldwide and are commonly found in soil, dust and manure. Infection with tetanus causes severe muscle spasms leading to "locking" of the jaw, so that the patient cannot open their mouth or swallow and may even lead to death by suffocation. Tetanus is not transmitted from person to person.

Tetanus is preventable through immunisation. The condition is now rare due to the widespread use of the tetanus vaccine.

## Do I need a dose of tetanus vaccine after cuts and bites?

**If you are not immunised** or up-to-date with boosters then an injection of vaccine is usually advised. Also, a tetanus antiserum may be advised if the wound is dirty and "tetanus prone". The antiserum contains antibodies which protect against tetanus bacteria but is it not a vaccine.

**If you are up-to-date** with tetanus immunisations then you do not need a tetanus vaccine. However, tetanus antiserum may be advised if the wound is particularly dirty and a lot of tetanus bacteria are likely to have got into the wound, for example, if the wound is contaminated with stable manure. The antiserum provides additional protection to your own immunity from previous immunisation.

Tetanus vaccination is now given in combination with diphtheria vaccination. It is recommended that a person requires only five doses of the vaccination in a lifetime. You would then be considered to have immunity.

## Administration of vaccination

The injection is given intramuscularly in either the upper arm or upper thigh.

- You may have some localised swelling or redness post infection over the infection site.
- You may have muscular pain over the infection site.
- Some people suffer mild flu-like symptoms post vaccination.
- It is rare to suffer an anaphylaxis reaction. If this occurs please call 999 for immediate help.