

What is tetanus?

Tetanus (lockjaw) is an acute and often fatal disease caused by a neurotoxin (*Clostridium tetani*) released by bacteria present in our environment.

How does tetanus infection happen?

Many people associate tetanus infection with rusty nails. In fact, *Clostridium tetani* spores are typically introduced into the body via a wound contaminated with soil, animal or human feces, or dust. Infection can occur from a minor scrape or puncture during gardening or renovating work, from injection drug use, or from an animal bite.

Immunization is recommended for everyone.

Tetanus immunization is part of the routine childhood immunization schedule in Canada. Booster doses are needed every 10 years after completion of the childhood series.

Tetanus immunization is safe and effective.

Publicly-funded immunization schedules for tetanus may vary between provinces and territories.



Talk to your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or local public health office about getting immunized against tetanus.