

# Temple University Occupational Health Program: Tetanus Vaccination

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Tetanus is a medical illness that is caused by the bacterium *Clostridium tetani*, or *C. tetani*. Tetanus is a disease of muscle spasms that often begin in the jaw ("lockjaw"). Occasionally the spasms become widespread and are severe enough to result in death. The spasms are caused by a toxin that is made by the bacteria after infection. The usual way that *C. tetani* infects humans is through the infection of a wound; most commonly a puncture wound from a sharp object. This includes animal teeth as in an animal bite.

The disease, tetanus, is preventable by vaccination with the tetanus vaccine. Tetanus vaccination is part of routine childhood vaccination in the United States and many other countries as well. It consists of a series of five immunizations. The tetanus vaccine almost always contains the diphtheria vaccine (Td) and sometimes the pertussis vaccine (Tdap) as well. After childhood, a tetanus "booster" is given every ten years. It may be given sooner if a person has sustained a tetanus-prone wound.

In order to prevent tetanus in the event of sustaining an animal bite in the course of research conducted with animals at Temple University, you can and should be vaccinated with the tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccine if you haven't received one in the previous 10 years or if you have never received the initial five vaccinations as a child. There are no known problems with receiving the vaccine in intervals shorter than 10 years in case you are uncertain when your last one was. As part of Temple University's Occupational Health Program, the vaccine is offered free of charge through Employee Health Services. It is strongly recommended by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) and the National Research Council (NRC) that persons performing research on laboratory animals be vaccinated for tetanus.

For more information on tetanus and tetanus vaccination, please refer to the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/td-tdap.pdf> (english)

[http://www.immunize.org/vis/chinese\\_td\\_tdap.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/vis/chinese_td_tdap.pdf) (chinese)

[http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis\\_td-tdap.asp](http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis_td-tdap.asp) (other translations)

You may receive the vaccine free of charge at Temple University's Employee Health Services between the hours of 8am to 11:30am and 1pm to 4:30pm, which is located on the undergraduate campus at the following address:

1700 North Broad Street, Suite 415, Philadelphia, PA 19121

No appointment is necessary. If you have any questions, contact Employee Health Services at 215-204-2679.

### Tetanus Vaccine Declination

If you choose not to receive the tetanus/diphtheria vaccine, you may do so, but you must sign and date after acknowledging the statement below and then fax this document to Employee Health Services at 215-204-1784.

I understand that tetanus is a life-threatening disease that can be caused by an animal bite sustained in the course of performing animal research at Temple University. I understand that the disease tetanus is completely preventable by being vaccinated regularly with the tetanus vaccine. I acknowledge that Temple University offers the tetanus/diphtheria vaccine, free of charge, to me as a person who works with laboratory animals as part of my responsibilities as a Temple employee, researcher, and/or student. I wish to decline the tetanus/diphtheria vaccine at this time, but understand that I may, at any time, change my mind and accept the vaccine, free of charge by the means listed above.

**\*do not complete if you intend to receive the vaccine at Employee Health Services\***

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\*fax signed declinations to 215-204-1784\*

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Philadelphia, PA 19121  
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