



Adult Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis Vaccine - dTpa (Boostrix™) Parents

What is Adult Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis Vaccine (dTpa, Boostrix™)?

dTpa (Boostrix™) is a new vaccine for persons 8 years of age or older that is designed to boost their immunity to diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough). It has lower doses of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis antigens than the childhood diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTPa) vaccines Infanrix™ and Tripacel™, to reduce side effects such as inflammatory reactions at the injection site.

For whom is Boostrix™ recommended?

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends a single dTpa (Boostrix™) vaccination:

- For both parents, before planning pregnancy or as soon as possible after delivery (preferably prior to hospital discharge).
- For adolescents. From 2004, dTpa (Boostrix™) has replaced dT (ADTTM) for Year 7 primary school students in Western Australia, in order to boost their immunity against pertussis (whooping cough). Pertussis immunisation lasts about 6 to 10 years, so children or adults who haven't had a pertussis vaccination for more than 6 years may be susceptible to pertussis infection. A pertussis booster vaccination is recommended for all children at 4 years of age, prior to school entry, and, since most diagnosed pertussis cases currently occur in children 10 to 14 years of age, another pertussis booster vaccination in Year 7 primary school is expected to help prevent outbreaks of pertussis among secondary school students and their close contacts (especially their families). From 2004, dTpa (Boostrix™) is free for Year 7 primary school students.
- For adults working with young children. dTpa (Boostrix™) vaccination is especially recommended for health-care workers and child-care workers in contact with the youngest infants, such as maternity and nursery staff.
- For any adult expressing an interest in receiving a booster dose of dTpa should be encouraged to do so provided that a primary course of DTP vaccine has been given in the past. With this same provision, dTpa (Boostrix™) may be used instead of dT (ADTTM) vaccine at 50 years of age.

Is Boostrix™ free?

From 2004, dTpa (Boostrix™) is free for Year 7 primary school students. It must be prescribed by a doctor for all other persons.

How much does Boostrix™ cost?

Retail prices are expected to vary significantly from place to place. Some GPs purchase vaccines from pharmaceutical wholesalers and on-sell them to their patients at cost. Some health insurance companies subsidise the cost of some vaccines.

Can a person have a Boostrix™ if they've had a dT (ADTTM) or diphtheria or tetanus vaccination in the previous 5 years?

Yes. There is no contraindication to dTpa (Boostrix™) vaccination less than 5 years after a dT (ADTTM) or diphtheria or tetanus vaccination, especially if pertussis booster vaccination is indicated. In such cases, inflammatory reactions at the injection site may be increased, but not necessarily.

What are the contraindications for Boostrix™?

There are 3 contraindications to pertussis-containing vaccines:

1. Encephalopathy (disorder of the brain).
2. Immediate severe allergic reaction following a previous dose of a pertussis-containing vaccine.
3. Known hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine

What are the side effects of Boostrix™?

Common side effects include pain, redness and swelling at the injection site and feeling unwell. Less common side effects include fever, headache, and tiredness. Most side effects last less than 48 hours.

What are the recommendations for Boostrix™ during pregnancy?

Adequate data on the use of Boostrix™ during pregnancy are not available, so it should only be given in pregnancy when the possible advantages outweigh the possible risks.

Where can I get more information about Boostrix™?

- The Australian Immunisation Handbook, 8th Edition, 2003: www1.health.gov.au/immhandbook/
- Boostrix™ Consumer Information (GlaxoSmithKline): www.gsk.com.au or (FreeCall) 1800 002 512