



# PUBLIC FACT SHEET

## Tetanus

### What is Tetanus?

Tetanus is a poison, made by a certain type of bacteria, which can cause very painful muscle spasms.

### How is Tetanus spread?

The bacteria causing tetanus is often found in dirt or contaminated objects and enters the body through a cut or wound in the skin.

### What are possible symptoms?

- Fever
- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Spasm of the jaw muscle
- Stiffness of neck
- Difficulty swallowing
- Stiff abdominal muscles
- Other muscle spasms

### How is Tetanus diagnosed?

Tetanus is diagnosed by signs and symptoms.

### What is the treatment for Tetanus?

There is no specific treatment for tetanus. The main goal is to keep the person with tetanus as comfortable as possible during the course of the illness and to prevent further complications.

### How can Tetanus be prevented?

Tetanus is prevented by vaccination preferably before injury, or as soon after injury as possible.

### For more information on Tetanus:

Ottawa County Health Department  
[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)  
Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/tetanus/default.htm>

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