

For pupils and parents/guardians

Information on vaccination against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) and polio (DTP-IPV vaccine)

The Norwegian Childhood Immunisation Programme offers pupils in 2nd grade (ages 7–8) a booster dose of the vaccine against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) and polio. In this programme three doses of the vaccine are given before the child turns one year old. A booster dose is now offered to maintain this good protection. The pupils will be offered a new booster dose against the same diseases in 10th grade.

About the diseases

Diphtheria is an acute infection in the upper airways that is caused by diphtheria bacteria. The bacteria produce toxins causing the mucous membranes in the throat to swell, so that it becomes difficult to breathe. The toxins can also attack the heart, kidneys and nerve tissues. The disease can be fatal. The bacteria are found in parts of Europe and other areas of the world.

Tetanus is caused by a bacteria found in soil. The bacteria produce toxins that attack the nervous system causing muscle stiffness and painful cramps. Infection can occur when the bacteria enters an open wound. It is not contagious. The disease has a high death rate. Tetanus is less common in Scandinavia than in warmer countries.

Whooping cough (pertussis) is an infection in the airways with persistent, intense bouts of coughing that last 6–12 weeks. In babies and infants, whooping cough can cause the child to stop breathing. It can cause brain damage due to lack of oxygen and, in rare cases, death. In older children and adults, the disease can cause chronic problems. The disease is highly contagious – almost everyone got infected before the immunisation programme began.

Poliomyelitis is caused by a virus and normally gives cold-like symptoms, pain in the body or diarrhoea. It can cause inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) and can result in permanent paralysis. Deaths occur. Today, polio is eradicated in Norway, but unvaccinated people can be infected when travelling abroad and infect others upon their return.

About the vaccine

The vaccine used is called Tetravac. In case of delivery problems the identical vaccine Tetraxim is used (same manufacturer, same ingredients). The vaccine can cause temporary redness, tenderness and swelling at the injection site. Some people may develop a mild fever. You can find more information about any side effects after vaccination with Tetravac/Tetraxim at the Norwegian Medicale Products Agency: [Legemiddelsøk](#) – DMP (only in Norwegian).

Before vaccination – remember to inform the school nurse

Please inform the nurse if your child has any allergies or has previously experienced a severe allergic reaction, regardless of the cause. You should also tell them if your child has been vaccinated against tetanus during the last year or is getting allergy vaccinations (hyposensitisation). More information is available on our website: [Vaccine against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis and poliomyelitis](#).

For vaccines included in the Childhood Immunisation Programme, consent from one parents or legal guardians is sufficient (Lov om pasient- og brukerrettigheter §4-4, only in Norwegian).

Read more about the [Childhood Immunisation Programme](#).