

Tetanus Guidelines

As a result of recent flooding the Allegheny County Health Department has received many calls regarding tetanus vaccine. The ACHD is following the tetanus guidelines put out by the Centers for Disease Control:

“Exposure to flood waters does not increase the risk of tetanus, and tetanus immunization campaigns are not needed. While documentation of vaccination is preferred, it should not be a pre-requisite for work.

During flood cleanup, the risk of wounds may be increased. For this reason, cleanup workers should be sure that they are up-to-date with tetanus vaccination, ideally before starting cleanup activities. Adults need a tetanus booster shot every 10 years. Td or Tdap can be used; getting the Tdap instead of Td for one tetanus booster during adulthood is recommended to maintain protection against pertussis. Being up-to-date for tetanus vaccine can greatly simplify the treatment for any wound that might occur.

First aid, even for minor cuts and burns, is very important during flood cleanup. Immediately clean all wounds and cuts with soap and clean water. Talk to a doctor or other health professional on the scene to find out if you need more treatment.”

Anyone who is unsure of the tetanus vaccine status should contact their healthcare provider and have them check their records. The tetanus vaccine is widely available and individuals in need to a tetanus vaccine should seek one at their primary care providers or at the Allegheny County Health Department Immunization Clinic.

The Immunization Clinic is located at 425 First Ave, downtown, (entrance on Cherry Way under a green awning) on the fourth floor of the building.

The clinic is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays from 9am-4pm, and Wednesdays from 1-8pm.

If you have questions, please call ACHD Immunization Clinic at 412-578-8062.