



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts

About...Vaccines for Flood Victims and Workers

What are the disease risks of floods?

Outbreaks of illness after floods are not common, but diseases may increase because of dirty water, spoiled food, contact with insects, or crowded housing.

People who work in flood waters may be exposed to tetanus if they have open sores or wounds, or if they get cuts, scrapes, or deep wounds while cleaning up after a flood. If you receive a puncture wound, cut, or scrape, see your doctor.

Do I need any special shots?

- Adults should get a tetanus-diphtheria (Td) booster every 10 years. Every adult who hasn't had a tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis shot (Tdap) should have one Tdap shot in place of a regular tetanus shot to protect against whooping cough.
- Every adult should have received at least 3 doses of tetanus vaccine. Tell your doctor if you haven't had at least three tetanus shots.
- Make sure your children have regular medical check-ups and get their shots on time.
- Tetanus may be the only shot you need when cleaning up after a flood. Other vaccines are probably not needed when flooding occurs in the United States.

What should I do if I or a member of my family needs vaccines?

Call your doctor. You may also call your local health department for help.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/floods/after.asp#immunizations>.

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