

Tdap and Flu Immunizations

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health wants to offer preventative health measures for those affected by the Woolsey Fire. Select immunizations will be available at the Disaster Assistance Centers (DAC) to protect against illness given the situation and the season.

Injury and the Risk of Tetanus After a Fire

A tetanus immunization (commonly known as Td or Tdap) is recommended for people returning to the Woolsey Fire burn area, especially those who have not been immunized within the past ten years or who are unsure of their tetanus immunization status and will be involved in cleanup activities.

During cleanup after a wildfire, there is a risk of injury, especially with debris cleanup. Wounds contaminated with dirt or manure or those caused by an object puncturing the skin, like a nail or other sharp objects, are common ways people get exposed to bacteria that can cause tetanus. The bacteria that causes tetanus can be found in soil, dust, and manure. Tetanus can lead to serious health problems, including being unable to open the mouth and having trouble swallowing and breathing.

The time from exposure to illness is usually between 3 and 21 days (average 10 days), depending on the kind of wound.

Being up to date with your tetanus immunization is the best tool to prevent tetanus infection.

Good Wound Care

Immediate and good wound care can also help prevent infection.

- Don't delay first aid of even minor, non-infected wounds like blisters, scrapes, or any break in the skin.
- Wash hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub if washing is not possible.
- Consult your doctor if you have concerns and need further advice.

Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones Against the Flu

Influenza ("flu") season is now. The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu is by getting the annual flu immunization.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Flu usually spreads from person-to-person through droplets from a sick person's cough or sneeze. Symptoms of the flu include fever and headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone 6 months of age and older be immunized against the flu every year. Now is a good time to get immunized to protect yourself and your loved ones as the holidays begin.