

# Diphtheria

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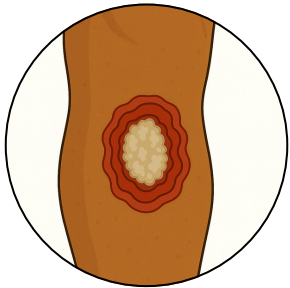
**Diphtheria is contagious infection** caused by bacteria (germs) that produce a toxin (poison) that can make you very sick.

**There are two types of infections:**



**Throat (respiratory) diphtheria** – a toxin infection in the throat and is very serious.

- Hard to swallow and breathe
- Sore throat, fever and chills
- Grey - white coating on throat and tonsils
- Tiredness, not feeling hungry



**Skin (cutaneous) diphtheria** – causes skin infections.

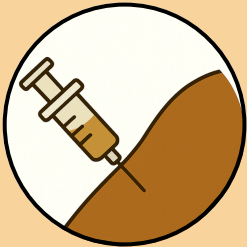
- Sores and ulcers that take a long time to heal.

**If you have a bad sore throat or skin sore that is not healing, go straight to the Clinic or Hospital.**

**If not treated quickly, respiratory diphtheria can lead to:**

- Long stays in hospital with breathing trouble
- Damage to the heart
- Damage to nerves causing weakness, choking and trouble breathing
- Death (severe cases)

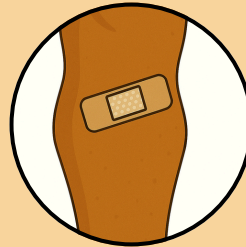
**STOP the spread:**



Get a Diphtheria vaccine booster if needed.



Cough or sneeze into your elbow



Keep sores clean and covered



Clean household items and surfaces

**If you have symptoms or want to check whether your diphtheria vaccinations are up to date, visit your local Clinic or Hospital for advice and care.**

For more information: [https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Diphtheria](https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Diphtheria)