



DIPHTHERIA

WHAT IS DIPHTHERIA?

DIPHTHERIA IS A DISEASE CAUSED BY BACTERIA. THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF DIPHTHERIA. ONE TYPE INVOLVES THE NOSE AND THROAT, AND THE OTHER INVOLVES THE SKIN. IT CAN ATTACK THE TONSILS, THROAT OR NASAL PASSAGE AND CAUSES BREATHING PROBLEMS. THE BACTERIA PRODUCE A POISON WHICH CAN DAMAGE THE HEART, KIDNEY, AND NERVES. OCCASIONALLY, THE BACTERIA INFECT AND INFLAME THE SKIN.

WHO GETS DIPHTHERIA?

CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE WHO HAVE NOT BEEN IMMUNIZED ARE MOST LIKELY TO GET DIPHTHERIA. THE DISEASE IS ALSO FOUND IN UNIMMUNIZED OR IMPROPERLY IMMUNIZED ADULTS.

HOW IS DIPHTHERIA SPREAD?

DIPHTHERIA IS SPREAD TO OTHERS THROUGH CLOSE CONTACT WITH DISCHARGE FROM AN INFECTED PERSON'S NOSE, THROAT, SKIN, EYES, AND SORES.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DIPHTHERIA?

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE SORE THROAT, FEVER, AND ENLARGED LYMPH GLANDS LOCATED IN THE NECK. SKIN LESIONS MAY BE PAINFUL, SWOLLEN AND REDDENED.

HOW SOON DO SYMPTOMS APPEAR?

SYMPTOMS USUALLY APPEAR 2-5 DAYS AFTER INFECTION WITH A RANGE OF 1-6 DAYS.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR DIPHTHERIA?

DIPHTHERIA IS TREATED WITH MEDICATIONS.

WHAT ARE THE COMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH DIPHTHERIA?

DIPHTHERIA CAN CAUSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS SUCH AS PARALYSIS, HEART FAILURE, AND BLOOD DISORDERS.

IS THERE A VACCINE FOR DIPHTHERIA?

YES. IT IS USUALLY COMBINED IN THE DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS, AND ACCELLULAR PERTUSSIS VACCINE (DTAP). THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE PROTECTION MEASURE IS BEING IMMUNIZED PROPERLY AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.