

# Diphtheria

[Fact sheet](http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/40/diphtheria) (<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/40/diphtheria>) - Health conditions directory

Diphtheria is an infection of the throat and nose caused by the *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* bacteria. Diphtheria can cause a membrane to grow around the inside of the throat which can lead to difficulty in swallowing and breathing. Occasionally these bacteria can also cause skin infections. Diphtheria has been rare in Australia since the introduction of an effective vaccine, but a century ago diphtheria was the common infectious cause of death. Outbreaks still occur in countries with low vaccination rates.

## Public health management guidelines

- Read [Queensland Health guidelines for public health units](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp>)
- Read the [process for obtaining diphtheria antitoxin in Queensland](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/governance/diphtheria-antitoxin.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/governance/diphtheria-antitoxin.pdf>) (PDF, 217kB)

## Notification

### Pathology laboratories

- [Notification criteria for pathology laboratories](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/notif-criteria-guide.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/notif-criteria-guide.pdf>) (PDF, 55kB)
- [Notification procedure](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#np) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#np>)

### Attending medical practitioners/medical superintendents (or delegates)

- [Notification criteria](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#nc) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#nc>)
- [Notification procedure](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#np) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/index/diphtheria.asp#np>)

## Notification resources

- List of all [Pathological, clinical and provisional diagnosis notifiable conditions](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notifiable-conditions/list/default.asp>)
- List of [Public Health Unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp>) contacts
- [Notifiable conditions report form \(PHA S70\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/notif-conditions-rpt.pdf>) (PDF, 48kB) (if faxing notification, follow-up by phone).
- [Case report form](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/cr-generic.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/cr-generic.pdf>) (PDF, 504kB) - used by public health units to collect and manage more detailed information for enhanced case surveillance.

## Enhanced surveillance for public health units

- [Case report form](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/cr-generic.pdf) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/cdcg/documents/cr-generic.pdf>) (PDF, 504kB) - used by public health units to collect and manage more detailed information for enhanced case surveillance.

## Resources for health professionals

- [Immunisation](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/immunisation/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/immunisation/default.asp>) – Queensland Health website for health professionals.
- [Australian immunisation handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/diphtheria) (<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/vaccine-preventable-diseases/diphtheria>) - clinical guidelines for health professionals on the safest and most effective use of vaccines in their practice.

## Epidemiological data and reports

- View [communicable diseases data for notifiable conditions in Queensland](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/surveillance/reports/notifiable/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/surveillance/reports/notifiable/default.asp>).