



Signs and Symptoms of Wound Infection

Serious complications may result from neglected wounds and, at times, even the best cared for wounds. If you notice any of these signs when examining your wounds, see a health care provider immediately:

- redness or excessive swelling in the wound area
- throbbing pain or tenderness in the wound area
- red streaks in the skin around the wound or progressing away from the wound
- pus or watery discharge collected beneath the skin or draining from the wound
- tender lumps or swelling in your armpit, groin or neck
- foul odor from the wound
- generalized chills or fever

More about tetanus

Routine immunization with tetanus toxoid is recommended for all adults. Generally, a booster dose is recommended every 10 years.

Why is tetanus such a concern?

Every break in the skin must be considered a potential portal of entry for *C. tetani*, the organism that causes tetanus. Because tetanus is a real and potentially dangerous condition, you should be aware of your tetanus immunization status, especially when you have injuries.

Tetanus-prone wounds include compound fractures, gunshot wounds, crush injuries, burns, punctures, foreign object injuries, wounds contaminated with soil, and wounds neglected for more than 24 hours.

The two most important steps in the prevention of tetanus are immunization and the thorough cleansing of wounds with soap and water. You may also want to read Wound Care Guidelines.

If you are not sure about the status of your tetanus immunization, it is always best to consult a professional. If you determine that you need professional advice or treatment for your wound while on campus call: Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700. (Available 24 hours a day)

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment, please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web site at: <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu>