

DIPHTHERIA

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CAUSE

Corynebacterium diphtheriae
bacteria in airway



SYMPTOMS

nasal discharge
sore throat
weakness
fever
headache
bluish skin
swollen neck
“barking” cough
painful swallowing
difficulty breathing

PREVENTION

DTaP vaccine
injections plus
TdaP adult booster



COMPLICATIONS

airway blockage



pneumonia



heart damage



nerve damage



paralysis



death



EPIDEMIOLOGY

spread via **direct contact** or
through the air

bacteria produce **diphtheria toxin**
which prevents normal cell function

outbreaks are rare but still occur among
unvaccinated populations

6-7

avg. number of people an infected person
will infect while contagious (R_0)

5-20%

rate of fatality
depending on age
(highest rates at
< age 5 and
> age 40)

50%

rate of fatality
prior to vaccines
and modern
medicine