

Diphtheria Control Measures

** **Note that the steps are not ordered by priority since several of these steps are conducted simultaneously** **

- ❖ Initiate control measures ***within 3 days of initial case notification***
- ❖ Rapidly identify and evaluate high risk/exposed close contacts
 - Only close contacts of a patient with culture-confirmed or suspected diphtheria should be considered at increased risk for acquiring secondary disease.
 - Such contacts include all household members and other person with a history of habitual close contact with the patient, as well as those directly exposed to oral secretions of the patient.
 - Those who handle food or work with children shall be excluded until nose and throat cultures are negative
 - Recommended prophylaxis and vaccination
- ❖ Identified carriers of *C. diphtheria* should be cultured after they complete antimicrobial therapy. Those who continue to carry the organism should receive an additional course of antibiotics and follow-up cultures of pharyngeal specimens should be obtained
- ❖ Patient should be kept in strict isolation until two cultures from both throat and nose, taken at least 24 hours apart and at least 24 hours after cessation of antimicrobial therapy, are negative for diphtheria bacilli. If cultures are not possible, patient should be kept in isolation for 14 days following appropriate antibiotic treatment
- ❖ Obtain immunization history of case/contacts
- ❖ Provide education that includes basic information about the disease, its complications, and ways to treat and prevent transmission of illness.
 - Instruct cases and contacts on the necessary isolation or any other restrictions
 - Counsel contacts to watch for signs or symptoms of mumps occurring within 1-10 days after exposure and to seek medical care promptly
 - Their PCP should be notified, and proper specimens taken



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