



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Spring - the time for gardening, home renovations and...your tetanus booster!

For Immediate Release

**OTTAWA – May 18, 2012** – Spring is the season when many Canadians get outside and get their hands dirty – gardening, outdoor renovations or just playing outdoors. So this May long weekend and throughout the spring and summer, the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion (CCIAP) reminds Canadians of the risk of contracting tetanus – an acute and often fatal disease caused by an extremely strong toxin found in soil and dirt that affects the nerves.

Most Canadians associate tetanus with rusty nails, but infection usually occurs when an individual is exposed to the toxin through a cut or puncture – i.e., a scratch from a rose bush or a cut from home maintenance or gardening tools used outdoors.

Symptoms associated with tetanus infection include stiffness of the jaw, known as lockjaw, and severe muscle spasms which usually appear approximately eight days after infection.

“Most people understand the importance of tetanus immunization, but many don’t realize that a booster dose is needed every 10 years,” states Dr. Susan Bowles, Chair, CCIAP. “Others can’t recall when they had their last tetanus immunization.”

CCIAP asks Canadians to check their immunization records to make sure they are up to date with their tetanus immunizations before they get their hands dirty this spring. Tetanus immunization is safe and effective.

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#### Media Enquiries:

Jennifer Stevens

Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion (CCIAP)

Work: (613) 725-3769, ext. 122 or 151 • Cell: (613) 897-6438

Email: [immunize@cpha.ca](mailto:immunize@cpha.ca)

[immunize.ca](http://immunize.ca)

<http://immunize.ca/en/diseases-vaccines/tetanus.aspx>

#### About the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion (CCIAP):

The Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion (CCIAP) is a partnership of national non-governmental, professional health, consumer, government and private sector organizations. It is a trustworthy and independent voice in support of immunization of children, adolescents, adults, and health care workers. Its overall aim is to increase awareness about the benefits of immunization and promote the understanding and use of vaccines as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.