

Why do I need a Tdap Immunization?

Getting a Tdap is how you can help protect newborns and all the babies in your life.

The Tdap vaccine contains protection against Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Whooping Cough). A single dose is recommended for adolescents and adults.

What is Pertussis (Whooping Cough)?

It is a contagious respiratory infection. Older children and adults may have symptoms similar to a common viral chest cold. Infants are more likely to have serious complications that may lead to hospitalization and death. Pertussis is a vaccine preventable disease.



What is Tdap Cocooning?

“Cocooning” is defined as the immunization of *family members* and *close contacts* of a newborn. (Global Pertussis Initiative 2011).

Cocooning surrounds and protects infants from disease until they have built up immunity through their own immunizations. All people who come into contact with infants should be part of the Cocooning for those children.

- “Tdap Cocooning” means immunizing *everyone* a newborn (up to 12 months) comes in contact with, so none of them transmit Pertussis to the vulnerable infant. The infant should also be receiving a DTaP vaccination as part of their immunization schedule, starting at two months, to build immunity over time.
- Some hospitals provide Tdap vaccine for only the mother of newborns. This is partial “cocooning”. The newborn is much better protected if both parents are vaccinated prior to leaving the hospital, and all other family members are encouraged to be vaccinated as soon as possible to protect the infant.
- It takes 10-14 days for the immune system to build antibodies! Parents and family members are NOT protected from Pertussis immediately upon receiving the vaccine and should consider getting a Tdap several weeks or months before the newborn arrives.
- It is safe for a mother to receive vaccines right after giving birth, even while she is breastfeeding. Mothers who have not received the new vaccine for prevention of tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) should be vaccinated right after delivery.

Please contact your Primary Care Provider to get your Tdap now. If you do not have a doctor, insurance or cannot afford it, contact your local Health Department Office.