

Protect your baby from whooping cough.

GET YOUR PERTUSSIS VACCINATION.



Whooping cough (also called pertussis) is a highly contagious disease that is spread from person to person by coughing. It spreads easily in households, schools, and workplaces. Over the past 30 years, the number of people with whooping cough in the U.S. has been increasing. A person of any age can catch whooping cough, but children, teens and young adults catch it more often.

When babies get whooping cough, it can be life-threatening. Many need to be hospitalized because they cannot breathe. Some also develop pneumonia and other serious complications.

The good news is that vaccines are available to help prevent whooping cough. You can protect your family from whooping cough by making sure all of your family members, including children over 6 weeks of age, get a vaccination.

DTaP is a vaccine for children under 7 years old and is given in 5 doses before kindergarten starts. Infants as young as 6 weeks old can get a DTaP vaccine. Another vaccine for teens and adults, Tdap, also prevents whooping cough and is available to children as young as 10 years old. Only one dose of Tdap is needed to protect teens and adults.

Who Should Get Vaccinated?

- Most infants with whooping cough get it from members of their own household. Parents and other adults or teens in close contact with infants younger than 6 months old should get Tdap vaccine if they have not already had the vaccine. This includes grandparents younger than 65 years old, teenage siblings, day care workers, health care workers, and other adults who are in close contact with young infants. If you are 65 years or older and live with or care for an infant, please talk to your physician about pertussis vaccination.
- Women of childbearing age should get vaccinated. If you are pregnant, and have not been vaccinated you can get Tdap vaccine during your pregnancy or after giving birth. Partners and families can be vaccinated at any time, but preferably before the birth of the baby so they don't infect their newborn. About half of infants who develop whooping cough get it from their mothers. It is safe for mothers to get Tdap vaccine while breastfeeding.
- Many infants who get whooping cough are infected by teenage siblings. Your pediatrician can protect your newborn baby by giving your children and teenagers Tdap vaccine starting when they are 10 years old.
- If you are not sure if you and your family members have been properly vaccinated against whooping cough, you can find out by viewing your immunization records on kp.org or by contacting your physician's office.

Ask your doctor or visit our Injection Clinic as soon as possible to get yourself and your family vaccinated so you can protect your baby against whooping cough. Remind others to cover their mouths when they cough and to wash their hands often.