

Tdap — the Vaccine against Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Why do I need a Tdap immunization?

Getting a Tdap is how you can help protect the children in your care.

The Tdap vaccine contains protection against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). A single dose is recommended for adolescents and adults. It is possible for some vaccinated people to become ill, so when possible keep infants away from people who are coughing.

What is whooping cough (pertussis)?

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

What is Tdap cocooning?

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

- "Tdap Cocooning" means immunizing **everyone** a newborn (up to 12 months old) comes in contact with, so none of them transmit pertussis to the vulnerable infant. The infant should also receive DTaP vaccination as part of their scheduled immunizations, starting at 2 months, to build immunity over time.
- The newborn is best protected if **both parents** are vaccinated prior to the infant's birth. All family members and child care providers are encouraged to be vaccinated as soon as possible to protect the infant. Pregnant women may receive a Tdap vaccine after 20 weeks of pregnancy.
- 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.

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 Vermont Health Dept office: