



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Vermonters Urged to Get Immunized at Free Tdap (Whooping Cough) Vaccine Clinics

Clinics open Wednesday, Dec. 19 at 12 Health Department District Offices  
(10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

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**BURLINGTON** – The Vermont Department of Health will offer free whooping cough (Tdap) vaccine to anyone age 11 and older on Dec. 19 at each of its 12 district offices. This is being done in an effort to slow the spread of whooping cough, and protect infants, who are at greatest risk for serious illness and death.

The vaccine clinics will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Health Department offices in Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Middlebury, Morrisville, Newport, Rutland, St. Albans, St. Johnsbury, Springfield and White River Junction. No appointment is needed.

**To find a district office near you – and for questions about the disease and the vaccine, go to [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov) or dial 2-1-1.**



Pregnant women and adults who have contact with babies are especially urged to get the Tdap – which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). Health officials also strongly recommend that expectant mothers get vaccinated later in pregnancy, not only to protect themselves, but also to pass the protection on to their newborns.

Vermont has had 522 cases of whooping cough so far this year, including 23 infants under age of 1. This is about 10 times the number of cases at the same time last year. Six infants have been hospitalized.

“Vermont has not had an infant death from whooping cough in more than 20 years and we all must do everything we can to keep it that way,” said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. “We are urging everyone over the age of 11 to take advantage of our vaccine clinics.”

Whooping cough is a highly infectious bacterial respiratory disease that is easily spread from person to person by coughing, sneezing, or even talking with others. It’s very often difficult to recognize in its early stages as it usually begins with cold-like symptoms. People who get whooping cough may develop a severe cough or coughing fit, sometimes followed by whooping, gagging or vomiting that can last for weeks.

Because it’s difficult to recognize and highly contagious, it’s hard to stop the spread once it gets started in a community, especially in the schools. While people who are fully immunized sometimes get whooping cough, it is usually less severe illness and less likely to be spread to other people.

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