

Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) Vaccine in Pregnancy

Why should I get immunized?

Tetanus (**T**), diphtheria (**d**) and pertussis (**p**) can be very serious diseases, even for healthy women. Tdap vaccination provides protection these diseases.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) causes severe coughing spells, which can cause difficulty breathing, vomiting, and trouble sleeping.

- About half of infants less than 1 year of age with pertussis are hospitalized.
- 2 out of 3 infants with pertussis have apnea (periods in which they stop breathing).
- 1 out of 4 infants with pertussis develop pneumonia (a lung infection).
- 1 or 2 out of 100 infants with pertussis will die.

How does Tdap protect my baby?

Your body makes protective antibodies against pertussis when you receive the shot. These antibodies pass through the placenta into your baby during pregnancy. Antibodies can also be found in breast milk.

Can newborns be vaccinated against pertussis?

No. Infants cannot receive their first vaccine against pertussis until they are 2 months of age, and it takes several doses until they are protected. Vaccinating mom during pregnancy, and everyone else who will be near the baby, is the best way to protect an infant.

How effective is the Tdap shot?

No vaccine is 100% effective. 90% of infants are fully protected against pertussis if their mother was vaccinated during pregnancy.

What else can I do to protect my baby against pertussis?

Getting the Tdap shot is the best way to protect yourself and your baby from pertussis. It is important that all family members and caregivers are up to date

with their vaccines. If they need to be vaccinated against pertussis, they should get their shot at least 2 weeks prior to coming into contact with your baby.

I got my Tdap shot during my previous pregnancy. Do I still need to be vaccinated?

Yes. The amount of antibodies present in your body decreases over time. All pregnant women should be vaccinated during each pregnancy, preferably between 27 and 36 weeks of gestation. This ensures that each baby receives protective antibodies against pertussis.

Is it safe to receive a Tdap shot during pregnancy?

Yes. There are no theoretical or proven concerns about the safety of Tdap vaccine during pregnancy. More information can be found here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/tdap-pregnancy-hcp.htm#safety>

Can I get pertussis from the Tdap shot?

No. The vaccine does not contain any live, infectious bacteria.

For more information, check out these resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default/htm>
- Centers for Disease Control Tdap Vaccine Information Sheet:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Tdap050913_420730_7.pdf
- The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists:
http://www.immunizationforwomen.org/immunization_facts/vaccine-preventable_diseases/pertussis
- Michigan Department of Community Health:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Whooping_Cough_Pregnancy_Flyer_Detailed_361984_7.pdf

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