

Whooping Cough

Be Aware. Treat It Early.



What Is Whooping Cough?

- Whooping cough disease (also called pertussis) causes coughing fits that make it hard to breathe.
- It spreads easily when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes.
- It can kill young babies.

Whooping Cough Signs and Symptoms

Early Symptoms

Often, symptoms start mild and are like a common cold:

- runny nose
- sneezing
- low or no fever
- mild cough

Symptoms After 1-2 Weeks

Symptoms can get worse fast and can last for months. They include bad coughing attacks that may lead to:

- vomiting
- a red or blue face
- a “whoop” sound
- problems breathing
- extreme tiredness
- sweating spells

Symptoms in Infants Are Different

Infants younger than 6 months old often do not have a typical cough. In the early stages, infants may:

- gasp or gag
- stop breathing
- get very tired
- have seizures

Symptoms can get worse very fast. Often, babies need to go to the hospital for care.

Treat Whooping Cough Early

Call Your Doctor If You or a Family Member:

- Are around someone who has whooping cough or a bad cough
- Have any symptoms of whooping cough

Your Doctor May Prescribe an Antibiotic Medicine

Early treatment with antibiotic medicine can:

- Keep you from getting sicker
- Prevent you from spreading the disease to others
- Be given to infants and other household members to prevent them from getting sick

If You Have Whooping Cough:

- Stay home. Avoid contact with others until you have finished treatment.
- If you are caring for an infant, have an adult who is not sick, feed, hold, and care for your baby.

Whooping Cough Shots Prevent the Disease

- Everyone needs to be up-to-date on their whooping cough shots (DTaP for kids younger than 7 years; or Tdap for older ages).
- Newborn babies are too young for the shots.
- Immunity from the disease or the shots wears off, so people 11 years and older need a booster shot.

Know the Symptoms. Call Your Doctor.

www.getimmunizedca.org



Parents:



Protect
Yourself
and Your
Children
from
Whooping
Cough!

Why Whooping Cough is Serious:

Whooping cough (also known as pertussis) is a contagious disease that can be passed easily from person to person. It is very serious for babies and can cause them to cough so much that they cannot breathe. Hundreds of babies are hospitalized each year for whooping cough, and some die from it.

Whooping cough can cause adults or teens to have severe coughing that leads to vomiting or broken ribs. They can be hospitalized for pneumonia and miss weeks of work or school. Even worse, they can spread whooping cough to the babies at home.

Ways to Protect Yourself and Your Family:

Get Your Tetanus Booster (Tdap)

Everybody in the family should be immunized against whooping cough to protect themselves and the baby at home. Parents should ask their doctor for the Tdap vaccine that includes a tetanus and diphtheria booster and also protects against whooping cough.

Make Sure Your Children are Up-to-Date on Their Immunizations

Children 7 years of age and older can also get the new Tdap booster. Infants and toddlers need four shots against whooping cough, and a booster before starting kindergarten.

Cover Your Cough and Wash Your Hands

Whooping cough is spread by coughing. Remind everyone to cover their mouths when coughing and to wash their hands often.

Protect yourself. Protect your family.
Get Immunized!



Have questions?

Visit www.GetImmunizedCa.org or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).





WHOOPIING COUGH is on the Rise in California Protect Your Baby

Babies Are Most At Risk

Whooping cough disease (also called pertussis) causes coughing fits so bad that it is hard to breathe.

Each year in California, hundreds of babies are hospitalized for whooping cough and some die.

Circle Your Baby with Protection

Whooping cough shots safely prevent the disease. But, your new baby is too young to get the shot.

To protect your baby, make sure that these people are up-to-date on their whooping cough shots:

- Anyone who lives with your baby, or
- Anyone who takes care of your baby.

Protection from the disease and the shots wears off. Make sure anyone 10 years of age or older gets a booster shot, called Tdap, at least two weeks before they have contact with your baby.

New Moms Need Tdap Protection

Babies most often catch whooping cough from a family member. By protecting yourself from the disease, you also protect your baby.

Ask your doctor for a Tdap shot. You can get it:

- **Before** you are pregnant (ideally),
- **During** pregnancy, or
- **After** giving birth.

If you have not gotten your Tdap shot yet, get one before leaving the hospital with your new baby.

It's safe to get a Tdap shot while breastfeeding.

Treat Whooping Cough Early

Call your doctor or your baby's doctor if:

- You or your baby are sick. Early signs of whooping cough are mild, and like a cold but can get worse fast; or
- You or your baby are around someone with whooping cough or a bad cough.



Dylan's Story

Before Dylan was born, I was sick and had a bad cough. I coughed so hard that it caused contractions to start early. Dylan was born a healthy, beautiful baby. But, I continued to cough and it was hard to keep Dylan awake during feeding – the only sign of pertussis he ever had.

Two weeks later, my son Dylan, died of pertussis that he caught from me. He was 17 days old. It is possible to prevent babies like Dylan from catching pertussis. Now I urge parents to vaccinate their children, and adults to get a Tdap booster. I don't want to see any family suffer the way mine has.

For more personal stories, go to www.shotbyshot.org

Talk with your doctor about getting a whooping cough shot.



California Department of Public Health
Center for Infectious Diseases
Division of Communicable Disease Control
Immunization Branch
www.GetImmuneCA.org IMM-887 WC (6/10)



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**Immunization Recommended to Control
Whooping Cough**

San Bernardino. The current epidemic levels of pertussis (whooping cough) in California have prompted public health officials to remind San Bernardino County residents about the importance of getting vaccinated. The rising number of pertussis cases in the state this year, may make this the worst outbreak of the disease in over 50 years.

“The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated,” said Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, San Bernardino County Health Officer. He emphasized that the adolescent-adult pertussis booster vaccine (Tdap), is now recommended for the following individuals:

- Anyone 7 years and older who is not fully immunized, including those who are more than 64 years old,
- Women of childbearing age, before, during, or immediately after pregnancy, and
- Other people who have contact with pregnant women or infants.

“Immunity from pertussis vaccine or disease wears off, so most adults are susceptible to pertussis and should get immunized to protect themselves and their families,” said Ohikhuare. Infants are especially vulnerable if they are not immunized or incompletely immunized. Infants under the age of 12 months have more serious illness from pertussis, and they are more likely to have complications and be hospitalized than persons in other age groups.

There were 1,496 cases of pertussis recorded in California in the first six months of this year. San Bernardino County has had 17 confirmed cases and 1 death since January. There were 16 pertussis cases in the County in 2009.

The pertussis vaccine is safe for children and adults. Infants can get the first pertussis vaccination at 2 months of age, but they aren’t adequately protected until the series of three shots is complete at 6 months of age. It’s preferable for pregnant women to be vaccinated after the first 12 weeks gestation.

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County Administrative Officer

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Parents can also help protect very young infants by reducing contact with persons who have cold symptoms or cough illness. Pertussis is a bacterial illness spread through the air from person-to-person, through close contact with droplets released when someone coughs or sneezes. The illness starts with cold-like symptoms that get more severe after one-to-two weeks. Rapid coughing fits follow, that may have a whooping sound, lasting 6 to 10 weeks.

Adults are urged to contact their health care provider for information about the booster vaccine that is best for them, and to get immunized. Immunizations are a routine benefit covered by most health insurance plans.

San Bernardino County Department of Public Health will provide pertussis vaccine in all its clinics. For clinic locations and schedules call 1 (800) 782-4264, or visit the website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph.

For more facts about pertussis and vaccine guidance, visit the California Department of Public Health website at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx>, or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm>.

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