

# VACCINES FOR CHILDREN



Dallas County  
Health and Human Services

SPRING 2013 - NEWSLETTER

## Pertussis (Whooping cough)

**P**ertussis, a respiratory illness commonly known as whooping cough, is a very contagious disease caused by a type of bacteria called *Bordetella pertussis*. Pertussis disease is only found in humans, and is spread from person to person. People with pertussis usually spread the disease by coughing or sneezing while in close contact with others, who then breathe in the pertussis bacteria. Many infants who get pertussis are infected by older siblings, parents or caregivers who might not even know they have the disease (Bisgard, 2004 & Wendelboe, 2007). Pertussis can cause serious and sometimes life-threatening complications in infants, especially within the first 6 months of life. In infants younger than 1 year of age who get pertussis, more than half must be hospitalized. The younger the infant, the more likely treatment in the hospital will be needed.

In October 2012, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to recommend that health care personnel should administer a dose of Tdap during each pregnancy regardless of the patient's prior history of receiving Tdap. To maximize the maternal antibody response and passive antibody transfer to the infant, optimal timing for Tdap administration is between 27 and 36 weeks gestation. For women not previously vaccinated with Tdap, if Tdap is not administered during pregnancy, Tdap should be administered immediately postpartum. Cocooning also helps protect infants from pertussis by vaccinating those in close contact with them. In addition to vaccinating moms, include dads, grandparents and other caregivers!

The disease usually starts with cold-like symptoms and may be a mild cough or fever. After 1 to 2 weeks, severe coughing can begin. Unlike the common cold, pertussis can become a series of coughing fits that continues for weeks. In infants, the cough can be minimal or not even there. Infants may have a symptom known as "apnea." Apnea is a pause in the

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child's breathing pattern. Pertussis is most dangerous for babies. Pertussis can cause violent and rapid coughing, over and over, until the air is gone from the lungs and you are forced to inhale with a loud "whooping" sound. This extreme coughing can cause you to throw up and be very tired. The "whoop" is often not there and the infection is generally milder (less severe) in teens and adults, especially those who have been vaccinated. Early symptoms can last for 1 to 2 weeks and usually include:

- Runny nose
- Low-grade fever (generally minimal throughout the course of the disease)
- Mild, occasional cough
- Apnea — a pause in breathing

Getting sick with pertussis or getting pertussis vaccines will not provide lifelong protection, which means you can still get pertussis and pass it onto infants. Pertussis vaccines are effective, but not perfect. They typically offer high levels of protection within the first 2 years of getting vaccinated, but then protection decreases over time. This is known as waning immunity. Natural infection may also only protect you for a few years. Keeping up to date with recommended pertussis vaccines is the best way to protect you and your loved ones.

### Vaccine Recommendations

**For Infants and Children:** In the US, the recommended pertussis vaccine for children is called DTaP. This is a safe and effective combination vaccine that protects children against three diseases: diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis. For maximum protection



against pertussis, children need five DTaP shots. The first three doses are given at 2, 4, and 6 months of age. The fourth dose is given between 15 and 18 months of age, and a fifth dose is given when a child enters school, at 4-6 years of age. If a 7-10 year old is not up-to-date with DTaP vaccines, a dose of Tdap should be given before the 11-12 year old check up.

**For Preteens and Adolescents:** Vaccine protection for pertussis, tetanus, and diphtheria can fade with time. Preteens going to the doctor for their regular checkup at age 11 or 12 years should get a booster vaccine, called Tdap. Teens and young adults who didn't get a booster as a preteen should get

one dose when they visit their health care provider.

**For Adults:** Adults who didn't get Tdap as a preteen or teen should get one dose of Tdap. Most pregnant women who were not previously vaccinated with Tdap should get one dose of Tdap postpartum before leaving the hospital or birthing center. Getting vaccinated with Tdap is especially important for families with and caregivers of new infants. Adults 65 years and older who have close contact with infants should get a dose of Tdap, according to the newest vaccine recommendations. Getting vaccinated with Tdap is especially important for families with and caregivers of new infants. Keep infants and other people at high risk for pertussis complications away from infected people.

The best way to prevent pertussis (whooping cough) among infants, children, teens, and adults is to get vaccinated.

### Did you know?...



- Coughing fits due to pertussis infection can last for up to 10 weeks or more; sometimes known as the "100 day cough."
- Pertussis can cause serious illness in infants, children and adults and can even be life-threatening, especially in infants.
- The most effective way to prevent pertussis is through vaccination with DTaP for infants and children and with Tdap for preteens, teens and adults.
- Pertussis is also known as "whooping cough" because of the "whooping" sound that is made when gasping for air after a fit of coughing.
- More than half of infants less than 1 year of age who get pertussis are hospitalized.
- Worldwide, there are an estimated 30-50 million cases of pertussis and about 300,000 deaths per year.

### VFC Information and Resources

2013 Immunization Schedules

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/>

Updated Pediatric Multi-vaccine VIS

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm#multi>

Tdap for all Pregnant Adolescents

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/tvfc/default.shtm>

TVFC CHIP Billing Requirement

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/tvfc/default.shtm>



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## Am I eligible?

### Planning for College....

#### Get your Bacterial Meningitis Vaccine!

A student, 18 or younger, who meets at least one of the following criteria, is eligible to receive TVFC vaccine from any TVFC-enrolled provider:

- Medicaid eligible: A child who is eligible for the Medicaid program
- Uninsured: A child who has no health insurance coverage
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Underinsured
- A child who has commercial (private) health insurance, but coverage does not include vaccines; or
- a child whose insurance covers only select vaccines (TVFC-eligible for non-covered vaccines only); or
- a child whose insurance caps vaccine coverage at a certain amount. Once that coverage amount is reached, the child is categorized as underinsured.
- Enrolled in CHIP

The 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2011, revised existing statutory requirements for higher education students related to vaccination against bacterial meningitis. The revision now requires all entering students to show evidence of an initial bacterial meningitis vaccine or a booster dose during the five-year period preceding, and at least 10 days prior to, the first day of the first semester in which the student initially enrolls at an institution.



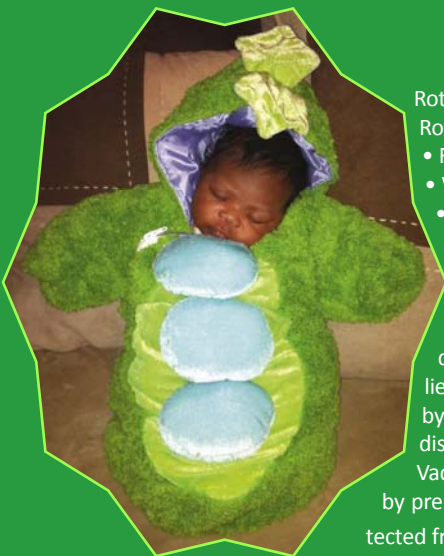
ter in which the student initially enrolls at an institution.

An entering student includes a first-time student of an institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education and includes a transfer student, or a student who previously attended an institution of higher education before January 1, 2012, and who is enrolling in the same or

another institution of higher education following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester.

For more information about vaccine cost, where to get the vaccine, exemptions, and other information: visit [www.CollegeVaccineRequirements.com](http://www.CollegeVaccineRequirements.com) or call the Texas Immunization Information Line at 1-800-252-9152.

## Prevent Rotavirus



Rotavirus is a virus that causes severe diarrhea and vomiting. It affects mostly babies and young children. Rotavirus causes the following:

- Fever
- Watery diarrhea
- Vomiting; and
- Stomach pain

Diarrhea and vomiting can lead to serious dehydration (loss of body fluid). If dehydration is not treated, it can be deadly. Rotavirus spreads easily. The virus is in the stool (feces) of people who are infected with the virus. It is spread by hands, diapers, or objects like toys, changing tables, or doorknobs that have a small amount of the stool on them. The disease commonly spreads in families, hospitals, and child care centers. Rotavirus can live on objects for several days unless it is killed by a disinfectant. It is very difficult to prevent rotavirus with just hand washing and cleaning with a disinfectant.

Vaccination is the best way to keep children safe from rotavirus! The rotavirus vaccines protect children by preparing their bodies to fight the virus. Almost all children who get the rotavirus vaccine will be protected from severe disease caused by the virus. ***Vaccinate your child on time!***

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## Every Vaccine on Time, Every Time!

### Vaccinate on time!

**N**ational Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is an annual observance to promote the benefits of immunizations and to improve the health of children two years old and younger. NIIW is part of a broad global initiative with the World Health Organization Regions of the Americas, European, Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific, and Africa to promote vaccination through education and communication activities.

It is important for parents and caregivers to maintain proper and updated vaccination records for their children, and to make and keep their children's vaccination appointments. All Texans must be educated about the successes achieved through immunizations, and we must continue to immunize children to prevent potentially devastating consequences.

Providers please remind parents, grandparents and caregivers about the need for timely immunizations. Vaccines are provided according to a recommended schedule; until the vaccine can be administered the child is vulnerable as are those who for medical and/or other reasons cannot or will not be vaccinated. By vaccinating everyone around an infant too young to be vaccinated, a "cocoon,"/ circle of protection, is provided for the child. Vaccines prevent disease and its consequences and reduce the costs associated with missed time from work, doctor visits, and hospitalizations.

Remember receiving recommended immunizations yourself provides protection to you and to our community.



Parts or full contents used within this newsletter were extracted from the publications of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Department of State Health Services website.

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