

WHOOPING COUGH AND TDAP VACCINE

Protecting you and your family

Anyone can get whooping cough, but whooping cough is much more serious in babies. The best way to prevent whooping cough is to be vaccinated.

What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough, also known as Pertussis, is a contagious respiratory disease. Early symptoms of whooping cough are similar to a common cold and include sneezing, runny nose, fever and a mild cough. After a few weeks, severe coughing spells begin and can continue for weeks.

Whooping cough is most contagious before coughing begins.

Whooping cough in infants and children

Coughing spells can be very severe in infants and small children. Risks include vomiting and difficulty breathing, eating, and drinking. Whooping cough can be fatal.

Whooping cough in teens and adults

Generally, teens and adults are less likely than infants and young children to become severely ill. Sometimes whooping cough can lead to vomiting, broken ribs or pneumonia, which may require hospitalization. Teens and adults can spread whooping cough to babies who are too young to be fully protected by the vaccine.

Vaccinating you and your family

The childhood vaccine that protects against whooping cough and other diseases is called DTaP. DTaP protects against 3 diseases: diphtheria (D), tetanus (T) and pertussis or whooping cough (aP). Vaccine protection for DTaP can fade with time. Teens and adults should get a booster vaccine, called Tdap. Tdap is recommended instead of Td because Tdap includes protection for whooping cough. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all people who have close contact with an infant younger than a year receive a single dose Tdap as soon as possible. This includes parents, grandparents, other family members and childcare providers. Anyone who will have close contact with your baby should receive Tdap at least 2 weeks before your baby is born. The CDC recommends you have Tdap between 27 and 36 weeks in every pregnancy. By getting Tdap during pregnancy, your baby will likely have protection from whooping cough before getting DTaP vaccines. Tdap does not affect breastfeeding.

We do not have the Tdap vaccine at Minnesota Birth Center and recommend getting your vaccine at your primary care provider or a local pharmacy.