

Why do I need to be vaccinated for Pertussis?



Adolescents

- The immunity provided by childhood vaccines for pertussis wanes after 5-10 years. This means that even though a child was given DTaP (vaccine containing pertussis) when they were young, they are no longer protected from pertussis by the time they are 10-15 years old.
- Pertussis is one of the least controlled reportable bacterial vaccine-preventable diseases in the US. Of all the diseases that are prevented by vaccines, pertussis is the most prevalent. Since the 1980's the number of reported pertussis cases have been steadily increasing, especially in the adolescent and adult population.
- In 2004, 34% of all reported pertussis cases occurred in children 11-18 years of age. This is the largest percentage for all age groups.

Adults

- In a study done of 4 states between the years of 1999-2002, 24% of all infant cases of pertussis had a caregiver who reported having a cough illness.
- Tdap is most effective when given 2 weeks prior to contact with an infant.
- Pregnant mothers are strongly suggested to receive Tdap (if they have never received it before) either prior to conception or immediately following the post-partum period to decrease the likely hood of transmitting pertussis to their newborn.
- Health Care Professionals are at an increased risk for exposure. In a survey of infection control practitioners for a pediatric hospital, 90% of their staff over a 5 year period had been exposed to pertussis.

Sources:

(2006). Preventing Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Among Adults: Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Antecellular Pertussis Vaccine. *MMWR*, 55 (RR17), 1-33.

(2006). Preventing Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Among Adolescents: Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Antecellular Pertussis Vaccine. *MMWR*, 55(RR03), 1-34.