

Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) Vaccine in Pregnancy

Protect your baby by getting the Tdap vaccine in every pregnancy.

What is pertussis?

Pertussis, or whooping cough, can cause a severe respiratory infection, particularly in young babies. Pertussis causes severe coughing spells that can make it hard for babies to eat, breathe and sleep.

Most hospital admissions for pertussis occur in very young babies. Thus, it is important to protect your baby during pregnancy against this serious infection.

Why should the Tdap vaccine be offered to pregnant women?

When you receive the Tdap vaccine, your body makes protective antibodies against pertussis that are passed through the placenta to the fetus (baby). This provides the best protection for your baby until they receive their own vaccine at two months of age. These antibodies are also passed to your baby through breast milk.

Studies show that receiving the vaccine in pregnancy will protect 9 out of 10 babies until 3 months of age. By getting the vaccine in every pregnancy, your immune system is boosted to make more antibodies to transfer to each baby. It also prevents you from getting pertussis during or after your pregnancy. This lowers the chance that you could pass pertussis on to your baby.

Is the Tdap vaccine safe during pregnancy?

Yes, the vaccine is safe for you and your baby. It does not contain any live, infectious bacteria so you cannot get sick from it. It also protects against 2 other serious infections tetanus and diphtheria.

When should pregnant women be vaccinated?

The best time to receive the Tdap vaccine is between 27 and 32 weeks gestation. This allows your body to first make the antibodies and allows time for these to be transferred to your baby.

If you are unable to receive the vaccine during this time, it can be given at any time until delivery and will still provide some protection to your baby.

Where can I get the Tdap vaccine?

Family doctors usually have this vaccine in their offices. Please be sure to make an appointment when you will be between 27 and 32 weeks.

Can I get other injections at the same time as the Tdap vaccine during my pregnancy?

Yes. You can receive the flu shot and the anti-D (Rhogam) injections at the same time. There is no risk of interaction between any of these injections.

If you have any questions about the vaccine, please talk with your doctor, midwife, nurse or pharmacist.

Where can I get more information?

For more information:

- Search 'tdap vaccine sogc': for a pdf information sheet from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada
- [Public Health Agency of Canada - Maternal benefits, vaccines and safety of immunization](#)