

Pertussis Vaccination Isn't Just for Babies!

North Dakota Department of Health Immunization Program

What is pertussis?

Pertussis, also known as “whooping cough,” is a very contagious disease caused by bacteria. **The disease is usually mild in older children and adults but is often very serious for infants.**

Pertussis begins with symptoms similar to the common cold. As the disease progresses, uncontrollable coughing spells can cause a person to gag, vomit or turn blue from lack of air. This type of coughing can last for six weeks or more.



How does pertussis spread?

The disease is spread through the air by infectious droplets. Pertussis is frequently misdiagnosed in adults because upper respiratory symptoms, such as a nagging cough, often resemble bronchitis. **Adults with pertussis have been shown to be a frequent source of infection for young infants.** Many adults may not even realize they are infected with the disease.



What can I do to protect my baby and myself?

You can help prevent exposing young infants to pertussis by getting a pertussis vaccine. A single dose of the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccine, referred to as Tdap, is recommended for all older children and adults.

How much does the vaccine cost?

In an effort to protect young infants from pertussis, the North Dakota Department of Health is promoting vaccination with Tdap for parents and guardians of infants younger than 12 months and child care providers. **The vaccine is free** for these individuals. The health-care provider may, however, request an administration fee.

Contact your health-care provider or local public health unit today.

To learn more about pertussis, visit www.cdc.gov/pertussis.

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☎ 701.328.3386 or toll-free 800.472.2180

🌐 www.ndhealth.gov/immunize



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