## Pertussis FAQ - Pregnant Women and New Parents

### I am pregnant and I live with someone who has pertussis. What should I do?

* Talk to your doctor for recommendations.
* Pertussis during pregnancy is not dangerous for the mother or infant unless the mother is still infectious when the baby is born.
* Getting preventative antibiotics after exposure to pertussis is recommended for women in their third trimester. This provides some protection to their newborn.

### What is the pertussis vaccine recommendation for pregnant women?

* The recommendation for pregnant women is to get one Tdap vaccine at each pregnancy. This should be as early as possible during the third trimester (between 27 and 36 weeks of gestation).

### Why is it important that pregnant women get vaccinated during each pregnancy?

* Women should be vaccinated during each pregnancy because the mother passes some protection to the baby before he or she is born.
* [Pertussis can be serious](https://www.doh.wa.gov/Newsroom/PublicServiceAnnouncements/WhoopingCoughPertussis) for infants, and most get it from parents, siblings, or caregivers. Getting vaccinated during pregnancy reduces the mother’s chance of getting pertussis and passing it to their baby.
* Protection from Tdap is most effective within the first year after receiving the vaccine.
* Getting the mother vaccinated at each pregnancy provides the best protection for each baby.

### If I recently gave birth and did not receive the pertussis vaccine while pregnant, can I get it now?

* If you just gave birth and never received Tdap (the adolescent or the adult pertussis vaccine), you should get the pertussis vaccine right away.

### Should new dads and siblings get vaccinated?

* Yes, all family members living in your house and anyone who will spend time around your new baby should get vaccinated. This includes grandparents and child care providers.
* Check with your healthcare provider to make sure your family is up-to-date.

### Can I get the pertussis vaccine if I am breastfeeding?

* Yes, it is safe to get Tdap while you are breastfeeding. If you are breastfeeding and you have not received Tdap as an adult, you should get it right away.

### Does breastfeeding protect my baby from pertussis?

* Mothers vaccinated with Tdap may pass some pertussis antibodies to their babies through breast milk, but it does not provide full protection.