



# Expecting? Protect Your Baby from Whooping Cough.

## Whooping Cough is a Widespread Threat

Each year, thousands of Californians catch whooping cough (also called pertussis).

## Babies are Most at Risk

Young babies have higher chances of getting very sick or dying from whooping cough. Very young babies with whooping cough may not have the coughing fits common in older children and adults but may gag or gasp. Their face may also turn red or purple.

## Protect Your Baby by Getting Tdap

**Ask your doctor for a whooping cough vaccine (Tdap) during your third trimester of pregnancy, even if you received it before pregnancy. You'll need a Tdap vaccine each time you are pregnant.**



**“Getting Tdap is something easy I can do to protect my baby.”**

*—Danielle, first time mom*

Tdap is safe for you and your baby.<sup>1</sup> The protection you get from Tdap also passes to your baby in the womb. This will help protect your baby during the most vulnerable period, until it's time to get the first whooping cough vaccine at 6–8 weeks of age.

## Get Vaccinated

Tdap vaccines may be available from your doctor, local health department, or pharmacy. To find a nearby location, please visit: <http://vaccine.healthmap.org/> Tdap vaccine for pregnant women is a covered benefit under Medi-Cal and private health plans.

## Treat Whooping Cough Early

Call the doctor if you or your baby:

- Have cold symptoms or cough that are getting worse.
- Are around someone with a bad cough.

If your baby is having trouble breathing (face turning blue, red or purple; gasping or having a pause in breathing), take him or her to the hospital or the doctor right away.



## Dylan's Story

Before Dylan was born, I was sick and had a bad cough. I coughed so hard that it caused contractions to start early. Dylan was born a healthy, beautiful baby. But I continued to cough, and it was hard to keep Dylan awake during feedings – the only sign of pertussis he ever had.

**Two weeks later, my son Dylan died of pertussis that he caught from me.** He was 17 days old. It is possible to prevent babies like Dylan from catching pertussis. Now I urge parents to vaccinate their children, and adults, especially pregnant women, to get a Tdap booster. I don't want to see any family suffer the way mine has.

—Mariah Bianchi

For more personal stories, go to [shotbyshot.org](http://shotbyshot.org)

### Reference:

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013, February 22). Updated Recommendations for Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid, and Acellular Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap) in Pregnant Women — Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2012. Retrieved August 2013 from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6207a4.htm>

FREE copies of this material may be available from your local health department: <http://bit.do/immunization>

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