



Protect your newborn from whooping cough

A whooping cough vaccination during pregnancy can protect your newborn from day one.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

- Whooping cough vaccination at 28 weeks is the best way to protect your baby until their first vaccinations at six weeks of age
- Vaccine is now free for pregnant women in NSW
- Your baby will still need the whooping cough vaccine at six weeks
- Whooping cough is serious and potentially life threatening

WHAT IS WHOOPING COUGH?

Whooping cough (also known as pertussis) is a highly infectious bacterial disease that causes severe bouts of coughing. In adults, the symptoms can be mild, but if the infection is spread to a baby who is not yet vaccinated, it can be life threatening.

IS MY BABY AT RISK?

Yes. Babies cannot be immunised against whooping cough until they are six weeks of age. Vaccinations for whooping cough are best given at 28 weeks in each pregnancy, giving your body time to produce antibodies that will pass to your baby before birth. These antibodies will protect your baby until they are ready to receive their own vaccinations at six weeks of age.

IS THE VACCINATION SAFE?

Yes, the vaccine is safe for both the pregnant woman and baby if given during pregnancy. Studies from the US and UK involving more than 40 000 pregnant women found only mild side effects such as pain or redness in the arm where the vaccination was given. It doesn't increase the risk of complications during pregnancy and the National Health and Medical Research Council has recently updated recommendations for pregnant women to be vaccinated in their third trimester.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Talk to your doctor today about getting free whooping cough vaccine in your third trimester.

The immunity you get from the whooping cough vaccine fades over time so you need to be vaccinated during each pregnancy at around 28 weeks.

It is also important that those who will be closest to your baby in the first weeks of life also receive a whooping cough vaccine. Make sure your other children are up to date with their vaccines and ask carers and close family members who have not had a whooping cough vaccine in the past 10 years to make sure that they receive a vaccination at least two weeks before they have any contact with your baby.

You can also protect yourself and your baby from the dangerous effects of the flu during pregnancy by asking your doctor for the flu vaccine which can be given at any stage during your pregnancy.

The free whooping cough vaccine during pregnancy is the best way to protect your newborn from day one. Talk to your doctor today about vaccinations.



Health

More information about whooping cough is available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/whoopingcough

visit health.nsw.gov.au/protectnewborns