



Expecting?

Protect yourself and your baby against flu and whooping cough!

You may not realize it, but changes to your body during pregnancy put you and your baby at risk for serious complications from flu or whooping cough.

Getting flu and whooping cough shots while you are pregnant can help protect you and your baby against these serious diseases. **The protection you get from the shots passes to your baby in the womb.** This will help protect your baby in early life when she is most vulnerable.

Is flu really dangerous?

Yes. If you get the flu, it is not the same as getting a common cold. You can still get the flu even if you are healthy and active.

Flu can have serious complications such as high fever, pneumonia, and even death for both you and your baby. Flu can also lead to pre-term birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth of the baby.

How dangerous is whooping cough?

For babies, catching whooping cough can lead to trouble breathing (turning blue or gasping for air), pneumonia, hospitalization, and death.

For adults, coughing fits can last for months and can cause vomiting, trouble sleeping, and even broken ribs. Whooping cough is highly contagious and can easily spread to others, including babies.

How common are these diseases?

Each year, millions of Californians get flu, and hundreds of babies are hospitalized due to flu. Thousands also catch whooping cough every year. In 2014, over 11,000 people in California became ill with whooping cough, hundreds were hospitalized, and three infants died.

How can I protect my baby and myself?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that all pregnant women get these life-saving shots:

Flu Shot

By late October (if possible). If you missed it, get it now!

Whooping Cough Shot (Tdap)

As early as possible during your third trimester—27 to 36 weeks of pregnancy— even if you got the shot before becoming pregnant. You will need to get the Tdap shot during **every** pregnancy.

**Pass protection to your baby.
Get immunized during pregnancy.**

Where can I get immunized?

Your doctor's office may have these immunizations. If not, ask your doctor for a prescription to take to the pharmacy. While a prescription is usually not required, it may be helpful.

Before you go, call your pharmacy to ask for their immunization hours and to make sure the shots are covered by your insurance. If you have Medi-Cal, shots should be covered at your pharmacy. You can also call your health plan to find out where your shots may be covered. After you get immunized, make sure to ask for a vaccine record and bring it to your next prenatal visit.

How safe are these immunizations?

Millions of pregnant women have safely received flu and whooping cough shots. Multiple studies have shown that getting flu and Tdap immunizations during pregnancy are safe for mother and baby. The immunizations do not affect the growth or development of your baby. The most common side effect of both shots is a sore arm. It is much more risky not to get immunized.

How effective are immunizations?

Both flu and whooping cough shots are very effective for pregnant women. Getting a flu shot during pregnancy can lower your risk of breathing complications and your baby's risk of catching flu by about half.

Studies have also shown that as many as 9 out of 10 babies will be protected against whooping cough if their mothers get a whooping cough shot while pregnant. Even if your baby gets whooping cough, the transferred antibodies can help protect her from dangerous complications and hospitalization.

For more information, visit:

1. <http://bit.do/flu vaccine>
2. <http://bit.do/pertussis4pregnancy>
3. <http://bit.do/effectiveness>
4. <http://bit.do/aboutflu>

If your doctor refers you to a pharmacy, ask for a prescription for the shots you need. Make sure the pharmacist gives you a vaccine record to bring to your next prenatal visit!

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Prescriber Name, Address, Phone Number:

Patient Name: _____ Date: _____

Vaccines recommended during pregnancy:

Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis [whooping cough]) at 27 - 36 weeks gestation
0.5 mL IM x 1
Best if given at the earliest date between ___ / ___ /20__ and ___ / ___ /20__

Inactivated Influenza
0.5 mL IM x 1

Prescriber's Signature: _____ License #: _____

Per pharmacy regulations (CCR, Title 16, section 1746.4), please notify us within 14 days of administration of the vaccines our patient received at your pharmacy. Also, please give the patient a copy of the vaccine record and ask her to bring it to her next prenatal visit.

Your baby is counting on you for protection. Get vaccinated.