

# Cocooning Protects Babies

Everyone in a baby's life needs to get vaccinated against whooping cough and flu!

## What is cocooning?

Babies younger than 6 months old are more likely to develop certain infectious diseases than older children are. Cocooning is a way to protect babies from catching diseases from the people around them – people like their parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, child-care providers, babysitters, and healthcare providers. Once these people are vaccinated, they are less likely to spread these contagious diseases to the baby. They surround the baby with a cocoon of protection against disease until he or she is old enough to get all the doses of vaccine needed to be fully protected.

## Why is cocooning important?

Babies less than 6 months old are too young to have received all the doses of vaccine that are needed to protect them from whooping cough (pertussis), flu (influenza), and other dangerous diseases. To be fully protected, babies need to get **all** the vaccine doses in a series – not just the first dose.

Unvaccinated adults and family members, including parents, are often the ones who unknowingly spread dangerous diseases to babies.

Currently, towns and cities across the nation have had whooping cough outbreaks. Influenza outbreaks happen every year.

## How can we protect babies?

Everyone has the opportunity to protect babies by getting vaccinated themselves. Cocooning is an easy and effective way that people can work together to prevent the spread of whooping cough and flu to babies.



## How can we protect babies against whooping cough?

- All children should be vaccinated on schedule with DTaP (the childhood whooping cough vaccine).
- All teenagers and adults need a one-time dose of Tdap vaccine (the teen and adult whooping cough vaccine).
- Unvaccinated women who might become pregnant should receive a Tdap vaccination.
- Pregnant women who haven't been vaccinated with Tdap should receive a dose in the 2nd or 3rd trimester of pregnancy. This will protect the pregnant woman as well as her baby!

## How can we protect babies against flu?

Everyone age 6 months and older needs to receive flu vaccine every year.

### INFORMATION FROM TRUSTED SOURCES

- ▶ **Video: Surround Your Baby with Protection**  
(about whooping cough)  
[www.preventpertussis.org/consumer/video.html](http://www.preventpertussis.org/consumer/video.html)  
*From the Texas Department of State Health Services*
- ▶ **Diseases and the Vaccines That Prevent Them**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/hcp/provider-resources-factsheets.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/hcp/provider-resources-factsheets.html)  
*From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
- ▶ **Vaccine Educational Materials for Parents**  
[www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/order-educational-materials](http://www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/order-educational-materials)  
*From the Vaccine Education Center, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*
- ▶ **Vaccine Information Website**  
[www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)  
*From the Immunization Action Coalition*
- ▶ **Cocooning and Tdap Vaccination Web Section**  
(cocooning information about whooping cough)  
[www.immunize.org/cocooning](http://www.immunize.org/cocooning)  
*From the Immunization Action Coalition*

Technical content reviewed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention