

Immunizations/Vaccinations/Booster Shots for Pregnant Women

One important step you can make for you and your baby's health is to make sure your immunizations (sometimes also called vaccinations or booster shots) are up to date. Immunizations can lessen the chance you will get certain infections; lessen your chance of becoming very sick if you still get the infection; and protect those around you from getting the infection.

The last routinely scheduled immunization in BC is during Grade 9/10 or approximately age 15. Most people do not know booster shots for tetanus (with diphtheria) are recommended every ten (10) years. **If you are 25 years old or older, you may not be up to date with your booster shot(s). Talk to your family doctor, visit www.immunizebc.ca or contact your public health department if you are uncertain about your immunization history.**

Pertussis 百日咳 vaccine in Pregnancy

Pertussis, often called whooping cough, usually starts as a bad cold and cough. The person with pertussis can have coughing spells so bad they cannot stop and may have trouble breathing and whoop as they breath in. It can be a very serious illness to some, especially babies. Pertussis infection is still present everywhere, including BC. In Southern Alberta, there is an outbreak of whooping cough (August 2017) and at last report there have been over 600 cases. Recently, some suspected cases have been identified in the Greater Victoria area (September 2017). For more information about pertussis, and to view a video clip of a child with whooping cough, go to <http://www.immunizebc.ca/diseases-vaccinations/pertussis>.

The National Advisory Council on Immunization (NACI) recommends that all adults should get one dose of pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine as an adult, but currently, it is not free for all adults in BC. If your last immunization was in high school and you are over 25 years of age, you probably have not had an adult pertussis booster shot. It is now recommended that every pregnant women should have a booster vaccination for pertussis in the last third of every pregnancy.

This vaccine has tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (Tdap) and can be purchased from a pharmacy or through travel vaccination clinic. The approx. \$50 cost can often be claimed back from private health or extended health insurance plans when prescribed by a doctor.

A woman who gets a pertussis booster shot in the last third of her pregnancy will help protect her baby until the baby receives the first infant immunizations at age 2 months. It is safe at any time in your pregnancy and the doctors of the Noakes Clinic encourage you to get your pertussis (whooping cough) booster.

Influenza 流行性感冒 vaccine in Pregnancy

Influenza season is usually in the winter months. It can include many symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle pain, runny nose, sore throat, extreme tiredness and cough. Some will also have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. Pregnant women, even healthy ones, are at higher risk of serious flu complications if they get influenza. This can have serious effects on the pregnancy and possibly the baby.

Moms can protect themselves and their babies even before their baby is born, if they get a flu shot while pregnant. **The flu shot for the next flu season is available near the end of October. It is safe, recommended and free for any pregnant woman, her husband/partner, her family and friends who will be around the baby.** For more information about influenza, who is eligible for free flu shots as well as where you can get your flu shot, please go to <http://www.immunizebc.ca/diseases-vaccinations/influenza>