

Protect your new-born against whooping cough

Vaccination against whooping cough during pregnancy can protect your new-born from the first day of life onwards.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

Whooping cough vaccination in pregnancy is the best way to protect your baby until he or she receives the regular vaccination at 3 months of age.

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Whooping cough is a serious illness that can be life threatening for an infant.

The best time to vaccinate is as soon as possible after the 24th week of pregnancy.

Your baby will still need the whooping cough vaccine at 3 months of age.

You can get a vaccination free of charge (at the cost of the Health Insurance Fund) from your personal physician or from another physician.

What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious bacterial respiratory infection that causes severe coughing fits. It mostly affects infants up to six months of age. It is important to remember that many babies with whooping cough do not cough at all, but may just stop breathing and become blue. Small babies are at the highest risk of serious complications such as pneumonia, febrile convulsions, brain haemorrhage, breathing problems and often need hospital treatment and may even die from whooping cough.

When is my baby at risk?

If he or she is exposed to a person who has whooping cough. The clinical picture of the disease is not characteristic at the beginning, so even people who do not have a characteristic cough may be infectious.

Why is whooping cough vaccination in pregnancy important?

Vaccinating pregnant women against whooping cough protects the baby against the disease in the first weeks of life, before it acquires its own protection through vaccination starting at 3 months of age. In addition, the vaccination also protects the pregnant woman from the disease who could pass the disease on to her baby after birth.

At which week of pregnancy is the vaccination recommended?

Vaccination of pregnant women is recommended as soon as possible after the 24th week of pregnancy and in every pregnancy. Vaccination is recommended even if you have been vaccinated in the past or even if you have had whooping cough, because the protection is not permanent.

Is the whooping cough vaccine safe?

Yes, it is an inactivated vaccine, is safe for both the pregnant woman and the foetus, and cannot cause whooping cough. However, mild side effects such as pain or redness at the vaccination site may occur. The vaccination also does not increase the risk of complications during pregnancy.

Will I be allowed to breastfeed after vaccination?

Yes, the vaccine can be given to pregnant women who will be breastfeeding.

It is important that the people who will be closest to your baby in the first weeks of life be also protected against whooping cough. So other family members and caregivers who were not vaccinated against whooping cough in adulthood should also be vaccinated at least two weeks before any contact with your baby.

Make sure your other children are vaccinated according to the national vaccination programme.

Vaccination against whooping cough during pregnancy is the best protection against this disease for your new-born from day one.