

## Whooping Cough (Pertussis) Information for City of Seattle Employees

Whooping cough (pertussis), a highly contagious respiratory disease, is at epidemic levels in Washington state. Newborn babies and infants are at highest risk for severe illness, hospitalization and death from whooping cough because they are too young to be immunized; the only way to keep them safe is to immunize the people around them.

Public health guidelines recommend that all children, teens & adults are [up-to-date](#) with whooping cough vaccine. Older children, teens and adults who aren't up-to-date on their pertussis vaccine can spread the infection to infants, pregnant women and others. To maintain their protection against whooping cough, most adults need one booster (Tdap) after age 18.\*

### Contact Your Provider

Because the vaccination may not be appropriate for every individual, we encourage you to contact your health care provider to:

- Learn the status of your vaccinations, including pertussis
- Determine whether you need the pertussis booster shot
- Schedule an appointment, if needed
- Update and maintain your vaccination record as appropriate.

The City of Seattle is not sponsoring whooping cough booster shot clinics at this time. Many primary care providers have access to supplies of the vaccine. If they don't, you may be able to get it at a local pharmacy. (You'll need to pay for it out-of-pocket and file for reimbursement from Aetna.) You can access a list of pharmacies through this web page:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/whoopingcough.aspx>.

### Medical Plan Immunization Coverage

Immunizations are covered under all City Group Health and Aetna Preventive plans. If you're on an Aetna Traditional plan, contact Aetna to check whether it's covered: 1-877-292-2480.

\*Additional information on pertussis, the scale of the epidemic and the vaccination can be found on the Public Health – Seattle & King County website:

- [Pertussis fact sheet and resources](#)
- [Fact sheet for patients with pertussis and their close contacts](#)
- [Information about Tdap vaccine.](#)