



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

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Dear Michigan Obstetricians and Gynecologists:

OB-Gyn providers are an important source of information for pregnant women and play a crucial role in a pregnant woman's decision to get vaccinated, protecting her health and the health of her unborn baby. Since women are encouraged to visit their OB-Gyn on an annual basis, many women of childbearing age rely on you for primary care. Therefore, you play a critical part in educating women about the importance of immunizations and providing preventative care services, such as flu and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination.

Pertussis can be a life-threatening infection in infants. In 2012, there were 15 infant deaths from pertussis (13 deaths in infants less than 3 months of age; 2 deaths in infants 3-11 months) in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

**To optimize the concentration of vaccine-specific antipertussis antibodies transported from mother to infant, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that pregnant women should be vaccinated with Tdap during each pregnancy.<sup>2</sup>**

Below are some key points regarding this updated recommendation:

- New data indicate that maternal antipertussis antibodies are short-lived; therefore, Tdap vaccination in one pregnancy will not provide high levels of antibodies to protect newborns during subsequent pregnancies.
- Tdap may be given at any time during pregnancy, however, to maximize the maternal antibody response and passive antibody transfer to the infant, optimal timing for Tdap administration is between 27 and 36 weeks gestation.
- If Tdap was not administered prior to or during pregnancy, give Tdap immediately postpartum.
- Tdap can be administered regardless of the interval since the last Td vaccine.

Pregnant women have been recommended to receive Tdap vaccine since 2011, however, uptake has been low. One survey of 1,231 women (August 2011 to April 2012) estimated that only 2.6% of women received Tdap during their recent pregnancy.

Protect vulnerable infants by vaccinating the women in your care. For information visit [Michigan's pertussis webpage](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize) at [www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize) or [www.immunizationforwomen.org/](http://www.immunizationforwomen.org/)

Sincerely,

Matthew Davis, M.D.  
Chief Medical Executive

<sup>1</sup>2012 Provisional Pertussis Surveillance Report, <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/downloads/Provisional-Pertussis-Surveillance-Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>Updated Recommendations for Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid, and Acellular Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap) in Pregnant Women, Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2012, 62(07);131-135