

7th December 2012

IMPORTANT NEWS
New recommendations for pertussis vaccination

Dear Doctor

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee has issued new recommendations for pertussis vaccination of pregnant women and cocooning of preterm infants to protect those who are too young to be fully vaccinated.

- Pregnant women who have not received a pertussis containing vaccine within the previous 10 years should be offered Tdap* (Boostrix) vaccine **between 28 -32 weeks gestation**. The timing of the vaccination has been changed to enable protection of the very young infant via the maximum transfer of maternal antibodies and is in line with recent recommendations from the US and the UK.
- Tdap may be offered to women later in pregnancy or to unvaccinated women in the week after delivery although this may be less effective.
- Tdap should be offered to close family contacts of infants born before 32 weeks gestation as they may not have received protection via maternal immunisation. This includes
 - siblings in the household who should have all age appropriate vaccinations including Tdap at 11-14 years
 - older adolescents and adults who have not received a pertussis containing vaccine in the previous 10 years who should be offered Tdap ideally two weeks before beginning close contact with the infant.

Tdap vaccine must be sourced privately for the groups outlined above. This is currently under review nationally and we will inform you of any changes.

Further information is available at www.immunisation.ie/en/HealthcareProfessionals/Pertussis/

Yours sincerely,



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*Tdap is a **low dose** tetanus (T), diphtheria (d) and acellular pertussis (p) booster vaccine