

Public Health
Central Zone

Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2018

To: Central Zone Health Care providers:
Physicians (Family Practice, Emergency, Pediatric, Obstetrics and Gynecology;
U of A Family Medicine Program); Nurse Practitioners; Emergency Dept. Staff;
Acute Care Pharmacies; Workplace Health and Safety/ Occupational Health and Safety;
Infection Prevention Control; Women's and Children's Health; Neonatal Intensive Care
Unit; Midwives; Prenatal Instructors; Public Health Nursing; Communicable Disease
Control

From: Dr. Digby Horne , Medical Officer of Health – Central Zone

Re: Prenatal Pertussis Immunization Now Part of Routine Provincial Immunization Program

Commencing January 1, 2019, dTap vaccine (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis) is recommended for all pregnant women in Alberta during each pregnancy, regardless of previous immunization history. This is to protect newborn infants from pertussis when the risk of complications and death are high until they receive their first pertussis immunization at 2 mo. of age. The vaccine has been demonstrated to be 90% effective in children less than 3 mo. of age and safe during pregnancy.

Administration is recommended to occur between 27 and 32 weeks gestation to maximize placental antibody transfer for infants born after 37 weeks. If necessary, vaccine can be given prior to 27 weeks for the purpose of wound management, travel, or anticipated premature delivery; there is no need to re-immunize later in pregnancy. It can also be given later than 32 weeks, up until delivery. Following delivery, it should only be given if there is no record of administration of a dose at age 18 yrs. or older, the standard recommendation for all adults.

Immunization is available from Public Health Nursing at Community Health Centres, some Physicians/Nurse Practitioners, and Pharmacists. Non-prescribing pharmacists require a physician prescription. All providers must check immunization records in Netcare or MediTech before immunizing and report all doses provided.

Further information on dTap vaccine is available from the Immunization Program Standards Manual: www.ahs.ca/info/Page10802.aspx. (click on Biological Product Information tab).

The Immunization Program Standards Manual can also be accessed through the Central Zone Medical Officer of Health (CZMOH) website: www.ahs.ca/czmoh [Resources>Immunization Program Standards Manual> Biological Product Information tab].

If you have questions, please phone Communicable Disease Control: 403-356-6420.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.