1. Whooping cough can be serious, even life-threatening, especially during the first 5 months when babies are too young to be fully vaccinated.1,2

2. The number of cases of whooping cough in New Zealand more than tripled in 2012 compared with 2011, with over 5,493 cases reported by mid December.5

3. As with tetanus vaccination, immunity to whooping cough reduces over time.16

4. Parents are the single most important source of whooping cough infection for vulnerable young babies.11

5. Vaccinating adults can help reduce exposure of young babies to whooping cough.1,2,13

An adult booster vaccine against whooping cough, known as Boostrix, is available in New Zealand and is funded for pregnant women from 28 to 38 weeks gestation, until the current pertussis outbreak is over.18 It is also recommended (but not funded) by the Ministry of Health for adults in close contact with newborns.1 If you are an adult in close contact with babies, you should discuss whooping cough vaccination with your healthcare professional.2

Visit www.boostrix.co.nz for more information on whooping cough and options for prevention.

The most common questions about vaccination are answered by the Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC): www.immune.org.nz

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Whooping cough is more serious in babies, especially during the first 5 months when they are too young to be fully vaccinated.\textsuperscript{2,7} They might go blue or appear to stop breathing and are very likely to go to hospital.\textsuperscript{1–2} Severe whooping cough can lead to pneumonia, fits and even brain damage or death.\textsuperscript{1–2} Most hospitalisations and deaths occur in babies under 12 months of age.\textsuperscript{1–2}

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Vaccination, or catching the disease, helps to build immunity against whooping cough.\(^2\) However as with tetanus vaccination, immunity reduces over time,\(^16\) although the exact duration of protection is not well known. This is why a further booster vaccine against whooping cough (Boostrix) is given to adolescents when they are 11 years old (school year 7) and why adults need boosters every 10 years.\(^1\)

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5 reasons to vaccinate with Boostrix

1. Boostrix® (combined diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (dTpa) vaccine) is available as an injection. Boostrix is a prescription medicine for private purchase – you will have to pay normal doctor’s visit fees and a prescription charge. Boostrix is for booster immunisation of people aged 10 years and older against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough). A 0.5mL dose contains not less than 2.5LfU of diphtheria toxoid, not less than 5LfU of tetanus toxoid, and three purified antigens of Bordetella pertussis (8mcg of pertussis toxoid, 2mcg of filamentous haemagglutinin, and 2.5mcg of 69kDa outer membrane protein). Tell your healthcare professional if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Boostrix should not be administered if you or your child are hypersensitive to any component of this vaccine or similar vaccines, or have had swelling or disease of the brain after previous pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination, or any problems with blood clotting or the nervous system (such as spasms, epilepsy and brain disease) after earlier immunisation against diphtheria or tetanus. Common side effects include fever, irritability, fatigue, malaise, headache, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea, and local reactions such as pain, redness, bruising, itching, or swelling at the injection site. If you or your child have side effects, see your doctor, pharmacist, or health professional. Additional Consumer Medicine Information for Boostrix is available at www.medsafe.govt.nz. Ask your doctor if Boostrix is right for you or your child. Boostrix is a registered trade mark of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies. Marketed by GlaxoSmithKline NZ Limited, Auckland. TAPS N6186-13JA/BOO/0002/13. H&T GSK1086.


Vaccination for parents and grandparents is vital to help protect newborn babies against whooping cough. Protect your baby by being immunised too. To find out more about Boostrix talk to your GP or Practice Nurse or visit www.boostrix.co.nz

Everybody has the right to be protected.

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