



Information Sheet – Tetanus Diphtheria Whooping Cough

Research shows that adolescents and adults account for more than half of the cases of whooping cough, a significant source of infection for young children.

Those in close contact can transmit whooping cough with infants like parents, grandparents, siblings, even childcare workers and healthcare workers. Infants under 6 months are at risk of serious complications.

Whooping cough is often misdiagnosed as “just a bad cough”. Whooping cough in children is often characterised by the “whoop” sound at the end of a coughing fit.

In infants, whooping cough can last 2 months or longer causing inner ear infections, long lasting bronchitis, pneumonia, fits and death.

While whooping cough in adults and adolescents generally isn't as severe as it is in infants it can still be debilitating. Symptoms in adults can include post cough vomiting, sleep disruption, urinary incontinence, pneumonia and fractured ribs. While rarely fatal it can result in significant disruption to social and working life.

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommend that adults and adolescents in contact with infants should be vaccinated. (Adolescents in Year 8 receive it free through the school based immunisation program).

Pregnant women are advised to have a Diphtheria Tetanus and Whooping Cough Vaccine over 28 weeks gestation. (This recommended with each pregnancy)

Dosage and Frequency

Vaccination is a booster only and currently can only be given as a booster.

Possible Reaction to Vaccine

Common

- Pain and swelling at the injection site.
- Fever, malaise and headache occur occasionally. These reactions can commence a few hours after the vaccination and may last up to 2 days. The symptoms mimic the **vaccine is not a live vaccine and does not cause whooping cough**

Uncommon

- Immediate adverse events such as acute allergic reaction are a rare consequence of the vaccine. The allergy is usually due to a component of the vaccine manufacturing process such as egg protein.
- There have been cases of clients complaining of nausea

Should you experience any unexpected side effects you can seek medical advice from?

1. Your GP
2. Your Immunisation Provider
The Immunisation Section (SA Health) 0900-1630 Monday –Friday
Telephone: 1300 232 272
1. If it is after hours, please call Health Direct 1800 022 222
2. Or your local Emergency Department