

## Booster Dose Td/Tdap

**TO: Parents**

**FROM: School Health Clinic**

**SUBJECT: Booster Dose**

Dear Parents,

The Ohio Department of Health revised the School Immunization Requirements to include a dose of Tdap to be administered before a student enters the seventh grade. Effective with the 2010-2011 school year and thereafter all students entering, advancing or transferring into 7th grade need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster immunization (called "Tdap").

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis. Immunization with Tdap can protect students, schools and communities against pertussis.

This dose is intended to be administered as a booster dose for students who have completed the required doses of the initial series of DTaP/DT/Td.

As soon as your child receives this vaccine, please provide proof of immunization from your physician to the Rushville Middle School Office so that we can update your child's school health record.

If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call.

Although the following immunizations are not "required" by law, they are recommended for children of this age group. Please check with your physician about the benefits of receiving the following recommended immunizations:

- MCV4 protection against meningitis
- HAV protection against Hepatitis A
- HPV to protect against HPV
- Influenza

**Please return this letter or a copy of the shot record with date of administration to school as proof of immunization.**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of birth** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Tdap booster administered** \_\_\_\_\_

**Physician/Provider Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

## FAQ CONCERNING Tdap

### **What is Tdap and what are the diseases that the Tdap vaccine prevents?**

Tdap is a booster vaccine for older children, adolescents, and adults. It safely protects against 3 dangerous diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (also called pertussis).

**Pertussis** – also known as whooping cough, is a contagious disease that causes violent coughing fits that make it hard to breathe. It spreads easily when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes. The symptoms can last for months. Whooping cough is particularly dangerous for young babies.

**Tetanus** – causes a severe, painful tightening (spasms) of muscles, including of the jaw ('lockjaw'), which can limit swallowing and breathing.

**Diphtheria** – is a throat infection that can lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure and death.

### **Do ALL 7th grade students need to get the pertussis immunization?**

Yes. Unless they have an exemption, all students going into 7th grade must have proof of having had the Tdap booster shot. This includes current students, new students and transfer students in both public and private schools. Many students have already received the vaccine and simply need to supply proof to the school, so check with your doctor or provider.

### **Why is the Tdap vaccine required?**

This requirement will help protect your child and others in your school and community from whooping cough. Whooping cough is a serious disease that causes coughing fits that can last for months. In recent years, whooping cough has been increasing in the United States. Whooping cough has been widespread in California and was responsible for 10 infant deaths in 2010.

### **Why does my child need Tdap?**

In addition to it being a requirement for school, children who get a Tdap booster shot will be better protected during their school years. Immunization also helps to protect others within the home, in the community, and at school. Immunizations help prevent school closures. Many schools in California have suffered from outbreaks of whooping cough. Students got very sick and parents missed work and lost wages to care for their sick children. In some cases, schools had to close because there were not enough healthy teachers to keep schools open.

### **When should my child get vaccinated with Tdap?**

Now. Unimmunized children are at risk for catching pertussis, getting really sick and missing weeks of school. Ohio law requires all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students to provide verification of having had the shot to remain in school.

### **What if my child had whooping cough recently or in the past?**

Any protection (immunity) developed after having whooping cough disease wears off, leaving your child at risk for getting whooping cough again. A pertussis booster shot is needed to both protect your child in the future and to meet the school requirement. A Tdap dose administered on or after the 7th birthday will meet the requirement.

### **Instead of getting a Tdap booster to meet the requirement, can a student get a blood test to check for protection (immunity) against pertussis?**

No. Testing for immunity to pertussis is not reliable and will not meet the school requirement.

### **How long do you have to wait after your last tetanus shot before getting Tdap?**

According to state and national recommendations, the dose of Tdap required for the school law may be given at any time after the last tetanus shot.

### **How soon does the Tdap vaccine work?**

Typically 1-2 weeks after the injection.