• Pertussis (whooping cough) is spread through the air by infectious droplets. It is highly contagious.

• Pertussis cases have increased in recent years, resulting in many hospitalizations and deaths, especially among infants. Many sick infants were infected by family members or caregivers.

• Infants are not adequately protected against pertussis until they have received at least 3 doses of DTaP. Therefore, vaccinating pregnant women, family members, and caregivers with Tdap is needed to provide infants with the shield of protection known as “cocooning.”

• Even when fully vaccinated with DTP or DTaP in childhood, a person’s pertussis immunity wanes over time. Fortunately, in 2005, the Tdap vaccine became available for use in adolescents and adults.
Contraindications and Precautions

- Do not give Tdap or Td to a patient who has had an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose or to a component of the vaccine.
- Do not give Tdap to a patient who, within 7 days of receiving DTP or DTaP, developed encephalopathy that was not attributable to another identifiable cause.
- If the patient has a history of an arthus-type hypersensitivity reaction after a previous dose of diphtheria or tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine, defer vaccination with Tdap or Td until at least 10 years have elapsed since the last tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine.
- If the patient has a progressive or unstable neurological disorder, uncontrolled seizures, or progressive encephalopathy, defer vaccination with Tdap until a treatment regimen has been established and the condition has stabilized.
- Guillain-Barré syndrome within 6 weeks following a previous dose of tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine is a precaution for Tdap or Td.
- Minor illness with or without fever is not a valid reason to withhold Tdap or Td vaccine.

Vaccine Dosing and Administration

- Administer 0.5 mL Tdap vaccine intramuscularly in the deltoid muscle with a 22–25g, 1–1½" needle.
- Tdap may be given at any interval since a previous dose of Td, even on the same day if an administration error was made.

Side Effects

- Tdap vaccine side effects may include pain, redness, and/or swelling at the injection site, fever, headache, tiredness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach ache.

Protect infants from the tragic consequences of pertussis (whooping cough). Vaccinate all adolescents and adults, including pregnant women.