



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Boost Your Immunity

Expanded Age Indication for a Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Acellular Pertussis Vaccine

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, may sound like a childhood disease but can occur in adults, too. Over time, childhood immunity can decline, putting adults and adolescents at risk for this disease. In addition, pertussis can spread easily from one person to another.

Dr. Jennifer Liang is an epidemiologist with CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss how adults can help prevent pertussis. Welcome to the show, Jennifer.

[Dr. Liang] Thank you, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Jennifer, how many cases of pertussis occur in the United States each year?

[Dr. Liang] In the most recent years, the number of cases of pertussis have ranged between ten and fifteen thousand, and this includes all ages.

[Dr. Gaynes] How common is pertussis among adults?

[Dr. Liang] The number of reported cases in adults in recent years have ranged between 2,000 and 6,000 per year. However, this number may be higher because adults tend not to go to the doctor when they have a cough illness.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is pertussis more likely to cause severe illness or death in older persons?

[Dr. Liang] Pertussis can cause severe illness in older persons, but most reported deaths are in infants. However, pertussis is very contagious, so if an adult gets pertussis, they can easily pass it on to an infant or child.

[Dr. Gaynes] Jennifer, what can adults do to avoid getting pertussis?

[Dr. Liang] We now have a vaccine available for adults and adolescents to boost the childhood immunity to pertussis. It's called Tdap and is approved for everyone over the age of 11. This vaccine also protects you from tetanus and diphtheria.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is the Tdap vaccine safe?

[Dr. Liang] Yes, this is a very safe vaccine.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, how often does a person need to get the Tdap vaccine?

[Dr. Liang] The current recommendation is a one-time dose. However, you should still get a tetanus booster every 10 years.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about the Tdap vaccine?

[Dr. Liang] They can go to the CDC website at www.cdc.gov and in the search box, type in Tdap, t-d-a-p.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks Jennifer. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Jennifer Liang about the availability of a new vaccine that can help adults avoid pertussis.

Remember, pertussis can occur in adults and adolescents, as your childhood immunity declines. A one-time Tdap booster can help prevent this disease. So, check with your healthcare provider.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.