

TO: EZIZ Users
FROM: CDPH
SUBJECT: First infant pertussis death in 2018
DATE: 8/7/18

Dear EZIZ Users,

Tragically, [California experienced its first infant death of 2018](#) from pertussis. This is the first infant death since 2016.

A pertussis epidemic is expected by 2019, and more needs to be done to protect infants from pertussis before it hits. Health care providers have a critical role to play.

Pediatric care providers should

1. **Recommend prenatal Tdap during prenatal interviews** and at every opportunity with pregnant moms. You can say, "I highly encourage you to ask your prenatal care provider for the whooping cough shot, Tdap. Whooping cough is a serious disease that can cause babies to stop breathing or die. By getting immunized, you are passing on protective antibodies to your baby. This is the best way to protect your baby against whooping cough in early life. This shot is also very safe for you and your baby."

Prenatal care providers should

1. **Make a strong recommendation for prenatal Tdap** (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis) immunization at the earliest opportunity between 27-36 weeks gestation. "I ordered a Tdap shot for you today because it is really important that you get immunized against whooping cough. Whooping cough is a serious disease that can cause babies to stop breathing or die. By getting immunized, you are passing on protective antibodies to your baby. This is the best way to protect your baby against whooping cough in early life. This shot is also very safe for you and your baby."
2. **Stock Tdap onsite.** Pregnant women who are offered an immunization onsite are much more likely to get immunized than those referred elsewhere.
3. **(If stocking onsite is not possible). Make a strong recommendation** for prenatal Tdap and make sure you refer to a specific pharmacy or clinic that is covered by her insurance, stocks Tdap, and is accessible to your patient. Ask your office manager to assist your patient in finding a location by following steps outlined in [this brochure](#).

For additional resources:

- Visit the [prenatal Tdap toolkit](#) page on eziz

- [Register](#) for the California Immunization Coalition's webinar, "Protecting Mothers and Infants through Maternal Immunization," scheduled for August 23 at 12 pm.

Thank you for your efforts in protecting infants from the dangers of pertussis