

*Your turn*

# Why get pneumonia and Tdap vaccines

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), pneumonia is the leading cause of vaccine-preventable death in the United States.

No wonder that name strikes fear in the hearts of many who hear it. While some healthy adults recover from this disease completely after careful home management, many people are at grave risk for serious consequences if they catch pneumonia.

People with diabetes, people whose immune systems are suppressed or weakened for any reason, people with any disease of the lungs or heart, anyone with kidney failure, HIV, or who is over 65 or under 2 years of age is especially at risk for catching and suffering serious consequences from pneumonia.

Unlike the flu shot, the pneumonia shot only needs to be repeated peri-

odically.

Furthermore, the adult pneumonia shot protects against 23 different types of pneumonia. This shot is a great investment for protecting self and fragile loved ones against one of the deadliest diseases in the U.S.

Pertussis, known as “whooping cough” and a serious threat to infants, has recently been found to infect adults in enormous numbers.

Adults usually don’t “whoop,” thus they do not suspect whooping cough.

The disease is not usually dangerous for them, although it has been associated with months of coughing, loss of sleep, and even cracked ribs.

But the infants exposed to these seemingly mildly-ill adults can die.

In 1976, only 1000 cases of pertussis were reported in the U.S. In 2005, the number of reported cases climbed

over 25,000.

The CDC thinks the real number of cases could be three million a year. Thus the CDC recommends that every adolescent and adult get at least one pertussis vaccination.

Anyone whose last tetanus shot (Td, which covers tetanus and diphtheria) was at least two years ago can get a Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and attenuated pertussis).

Alternatively, anyone who is due for their 10-year Td booster should, one time only, substitute Tdap instead.

A simple pertussis booster is an easy way to protect babies—our own and those around us—from one of the most terrifying diseases of early childhood.

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