

# As your healthcare provider, I recommend pertussis vaccine...

## Please **THINK TWICE** and vaccinate!!

Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is an infection caused by bacteria that causes violent and rapid coughing fits. Different than the common cold, it is known as the “100 day cough.” The cough from pertussis sounds different after a week or two and gets more severe as the illness continues.



**Francesca Marie McNally**  
February 24, 2012 – May 17, 2012  
Died from Pertussis at 3 months of age.  
Photo courtesy of the McNally family of Michigan.  
[www.frannystrong.org](http://www.frannystrong.org)

### **I thought this vaccine was just for kids...**

**This vaccine is for everyone.** People of all ages get whooping cough and it's not fun for anyone. Adults sometimes don't have symptoms as severe as a child does, but they can pass it to children easily. Adults protect themselves and children when they vaccinate!

### **It's a cough, why is there a vaccine for a cough?**

Pertussis is more than a cough. Pertussis causes such severe coughing it leads to broken ribs, vomiting, nose bleeds, pneumonia, brain damage, or death. It is most dangerous in children under the age of 1, who often end up in the hospital because of difficulty breathing and other complications.

**Pertussis kills babies under 6 months of age**  
more than in any other age group.

### **DTaP, Tdap...what's the difference?**

DTaP is for children through age 7. Tdap is given to older children and adults. **All kids and adults** who are ever in contact with children, especially babies under 12 months of age should be sure to get protection.

### **Why do pregnant women need the vaccine?**

Getting the vaccine while pregnant protects the newborn infant, who can't get the vaccine until at least 6 weeks of age.

Pregnant women should get the vaccine between 27 and 36 weeks gestation, with **each pregnancy**.

“In May 2009 I found out I was pregnant, as a young mom I was terrified, excited, nervous and just about every emotion anyone could ever feel when finding out such life changing news. When I found out I was pregnant with twin boys, my nerves [vous] doubled as did everything else in my life. My nerves became reality when I went into labor three months early and I delivered two premature boys. Collin was born first at 2lbs 2oz. and Corbin was 3 minutes later at 1lb 15oz. We watched them struggle in the NICU everyday for 2 months, some days not even being able to touch them, so I was excited to be able to take them home and give them the love I was so desperate to give them the moment they were born.



Collin and Corbin Srpingborn from St. Clair County, MI

We brought Collin home first and almost a week later we got to reunite the boys and start a life I was anticipating from the moment I found out I was having twin boys. We attended pediatrician appointments, eye exams, and had a nurse come to the house every week to check on the boys to make sure they were growing and healthy. I thought I was doing everything right.

One month after we left the NICU, Collin started showing symptoms of a cold, knowing what we had learned from the NICU, we took all the precautions of dealing with one being sick. We took him to the doctor many times over the week updating him on every new symptom, making many phone calls to NICU nurses and doctors, many assuring us to give it time and he would be able to fight the cold on his own. But something didn't seem right to me, his coughing fits would last forever leaving him blue in the face occasionally which would really scare me, but I was time and time again convinced I was being one of those over-paranoid moms that freaks out over nothing.

On the sixth day of his cough our worst nightmare had come true; our baby Collin stopped breathing at home, just 4 hours after leaving the doctor's office. After many rounds of CPR the EMS picked him up and we watched for the next 4 hours as the hospital staff attempted to stabilize our son, after no success they had to send a team of PICU nurses from Children's Hospital of Michigan to try to stabilize him so he would survive the drive.

When we arrived at the PICU they assured us they would find out what was wrong and why he was so sick, and they would start weaning him off the ventilator as soon as they felt he was able to handle breathing on his own. Experiencing what we had gone through having them early, we were familiar with all the machines and terminology, which gave me some comfort in a terrible situation. I have seen the amazing things they can do in hospitals and I never imagined what was going to come.

After two days and many tests they still did not know what was wrong, and before they could figure it out Collin passed away.”

To read the rest of this story and see what happened with Collin's twin brother Corbin please go to this link:

<http://bit.ly/1ysVRZb>

For additional information on this vaccine and all vaccines please see the following trustworthy resources:

[www.vaccine.chop.edu](http://www.vaccine.chop.edu)

[www.aimtoolkit.org](http://www.aimtoolkit.org)

[www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org)

[www.frannystrong.org](http://www.frannystrong.org)

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

[www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize)

[www.shotbysot.org](http://www.shotbysot.org)

If, after reading this information, you still feel vaccination is not right for you or your child, please follow this advice:

Make sure all health care professionals, including ambulance drivers, emergency rooms and urgent care centers, know you or your child is not fully vaccinated. It could help them diagnose and treat a vaccine preventable disease.

Pertussis can look like a common cold, but attacks of coughing happen with increasing frequency, getting worse after 1-2 weeks. **Ask for pertussis testing if you cough enough to vomit or anytime children have difficulty breathing because of cough.**