

New Law Requires Tdap Shot for 7th through 12th Graders

The New Law: California middle and high school students must be vaccinated against pertussis (whooping cough). Beginning July 1, 2011, all students entering 7th through 12th grades will be required to show proof of a “Tdap*” booster shot before starting school. This requirement applies to all public and private schools. The new requirement was signed into law in 2010 by Governor Schwarzenegger. Starting July 2012, only students entering 7th grade will need proof of a Tdap booster shot.

Pertusis (Whooping Cough) is Serious: In 2010 California experienced its worst outbreak of pertussis in more than half a century, with more than 7,800 confirmed cases and 10 infant deaths. The new immunization requirement is intended to help reduce the spread of whooping cough among California’s youth. Most children are fully protected prior to entering kindergarten because of the DTaP vaccine, a vaccine formulated for younger children. However, immunity to these diseases wears off and adolescents may be vulnerable to the highly contagious disease without a booster.

Where to get the Vaccination: Your child’s physician will provide the vaccination. In addition the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency has immunization clinics in Watsonville and in Santa Cruz.

Location	Procedure	Cost for Immunization	Visit Fee
Santa Cruz Health Center 1080 Emeline Ave. Santa Cruz, CA (831)-454-4100	Drop-in/no appointment needed: Monday - Friday 1 - 4:30 PM	For Children: \$15 per shot No Fee for MediCal or CHDP eligible families	None
Watsonville Health Center 9 Crestview Drive Watsonville, CA (831)-763-8400	Drop-in/no appointment needed: Monday - Friday 1 - 4:30 PM	For Children: \$15 per shot No Fee for MediCal or CHDP eligible families	None

Approximately 3 million school children will be affected by the Tdap requirement, so it’s important to avoid the summer rush and to get children vaccinated now.

The California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Education have been working collaboratively on this important measure. Information for parents on the new Tdap requirement, forms, and FAQs are available at www.ShotsForSchools.org.

Remember, in addition to the Tdap booster, there are several important vaccines recommended for preteens and teens including the meningococcal vaccine, a second chickenpox shot (if they never had chickenpox disease), and the HPV vaccine series. Everyone older than six months old is recommended to receive a seasonal flu vaccine.

*The Tdap booster is Tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine. CDPH recommends a Tdap shot for children and adults 10 years and older.

A series of website banners are available at: http://eziz.org/new_rule_banner.html