

VACCINATION MATTERS

Help Protect Families from Whooping Cough

SURVEY RESULTS

Pertussis Immunization Practices and Needs

ABOUT THE SURVEY

- The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recently surveyed a sampling of its members. More than 250 family physicians responded to the online survey about their pertussis immunization practices and needs.
- Starting with this survey, the AAFP initiative **Vaccination Matters: Help Protect Families from Whooping Cough** is intended to reinforce the important role family physicians play in keeping the whole family healthy and protected from pertussis.
- **The survey results show that our physicians are well informed and play an active role in helping to protect their patients from pertussis.** However, responses suggest that there is room for improvement in immunizing against pertussis. Family physicians are ideally positioned to manage this disease, since it affects all ages.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Almost all physicians (96%) surveyed are “somewhat familiar” to “very familiar” with the guidelines on Td/Tdap vaccination, which are recommended by the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and other organizations, including AAFP.

Only one-third (29%) reviewed the vaccination status of adult patients 19 years and older more than 75 percent of the time.

The majority (81%) believe that pertussis is a difficult disease to diagnose in adults.

Many expressed that patient resistance (46%) and lack of patient awareness (54%) are barriers to vaccinating patients with the Tdap vaccine.

ADDITIONAL FACTS ON PERTUSSIS

- The CDC’s ACIP and AAFP recommend that adolescents and adults should get a single dose of Tdap for continued protection against pertussis if they have not been vaccinated or if their shots are not up to date.
- According to the CDC, Tdap use in adults will reduce pertussis exposure of infants or others who are at risk and will reduce the overall cost-burden on the U.S. healthcare system.
- The CDC estimates that about 600,000 cases of pertussis occur annually; and statistics indicate that only two percent of adults received a Tdap vaccine between 2005 and 2007, leaving many adults at risk to contract the disease.
- Later this year, the Academy will be launching a national awareness campaign to educate the public about the seriousness of pertussis and the importance of pertussis protection for all ages. As an organization that represents physicians who see and treat patients of all ages, the Academy has made improving vaccination rates and protection from vaccine-preventable diseases like pertussis a priority for the organization and its physicians.



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