Pertussis is on the rise

Whooping Cough (or pertussis) is Not Just For Kids………

Pertussis, also known as "whooping cough," is a communicable bacterial disease that is spread through droplets from the mouth and nose when a person with pertussis coughs, sneezes, or talks. This disease has reached epidemic levels in Washington; with over a tenfold increase in cases since last year.

Pertussis vaccines are recommended for all children, adolescents and adults. The shots given to children wear off over time and therefore, everyone age 11 and older should receive a pertussis booster, called Tdap. Tdap vaccine is comprised of tetanus-diphtheria and pertussis and provides relatively good immunity against these diseases.

Current UW- Seattle students can get a Tdap booster on a walk in basis at Hall Health or can call the consulting nurses with questions about the vaccine: 206-221-2517. UW employees and members of the public can also receive a Tdap vaccine by making a Hall Health appointment at 206.616.2495. You can also get a Tdap vaccine from your health care provider and pharmacies can be a convenient location for older children and adults.


UW Tacoma students can find vaccine information at the Tacoma-Pierce County Department of Public Health [http://www.tpchd.org/health-wellness-1/diseases-conditions/pertussis/](http://www.tpchd.org/health-wellness-1/diseases-conditions/pertussis/).


Unrecognized infections in older children and adults are thought to be the most common source of pertussis transmission to infants in the community. It is especially important for those around infants who are less than one year old to get a dose of Tdap to help protect them from whooping cough as the disease is more severe in infants and can lead to hospitalization and death. Tdap should be administered regardless of interval since the last tetanus or diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine. If you have no record of receiving your Tdap booster, please contact your health care provider to do so.