



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

14 September 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM/SGP

FROM: AFMSA/SG3PM
1780 AF Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1780

SUBJECT: Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid, and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a vaccine-preventable disease with considerable morbidity and mortality that has been insufficiently controlled in recent years. In 2009, there were 16,858 cases of pertussis reported in the U.S., and 12 infant deaths due to pertussis. In 2008, 56% of adolescents aged 11 to 18 years old in the U.S. had received a Tdap immunization, but fewer than 6% of adults aged 18 to 64 years old had.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has expanded their recommendations on the use of Tdap to include certain adults aged 65 years and older and children aged 7-10 years, and to decrease the necessary interval between a prior dose of a tetanus containing vaccine. Although the Food and Drug Administration has not yet fully amended the package inserts for the two Tdap vaccines to include these expanded recommendations, safety and surveillance data indicate that the vaccine is safe and effective in these children and older adults.

Adolescents from 11 years to 18 years of age who have completed the recommended vaccination series of tetanus and diphtheria toxoids in combination with either pertussis or acellular pertussis (DTP/DTaP) should receive a single dose of Tdap. The ideal time for adolescents to receive the shot is at their 11 to 12 year old preventive health visit. Adults 19 through 64 years should also receive a single dose of Tdap if they have not already received one.

Adults over the age of 65 years who anticipate having close contact with an infant less than 12 months of age (e.g. grandparents, child-care providers, and healthcare workers) should also receive a single dose of Tdap, preferably before handling or playing with infants. Other adults over the age of 65 years may be given a single dose of Tdap instead of their next dose of tetanus toxoid with reduced diphtheria toxoid (Td) vaccine.

Children who are 7-10 years of age and have not been fully vaccinated against tetanus and are due for a tetanus vaccination, may receive the Tdap in lieu an immunization that does not contain pertussis vaccine.

If pertussis vaccination is indicated, it should not be delayed to a future visit. Tdap should be administered regardless of the interval since their last tetanus or diphtheria toxoid containing vaccine.

My contact information is (703) 588-6470, DSN 425-6470, or philip.gould@pentagon.af.mil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Gould", is positioned above the typed name.

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