



2007 National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). August 2007

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Pertussis continues to be a public health threat in Texas. The **Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)** is asking everyone to get vaccinated against pertussis as part of the 2007 observance of National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), August 1 through August 31.

Pertussis runs in three year cycles. During the first year, usually there are a low number of cases; in the second year the number increases, and it peaks in the third year. 2005 was the third year of a cycle peaking at 2,224 cases and nine deaths—eight of the deaths were infants younger than two months old. In 2006 the number of cases went down to 954, of which 248 were infants under one year of age. Last year there was only one death; but one death is one death too many.

Pertussis is especially dangerous to infants who often get the disease from older children and adults. Hospitalizations and deaths from pertussis most often happen among infants less than three months of age. To protect infants, those around them must be vaccinated against pertussis.

In 2005, a new vaccine against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, called Tdap was licensed for older children and adults. It is important all older children and adults receive this vaccine. Please contact your health care provider to determine when it is medically recommended for you and your family to be vaccinated with Tdap.

Tdap can be used instead of the Td vaccine to satisfy school requirements.

More information on pertussis is available through www.immunizetexas.com website or by calling 1-800-252-9152.

For more information, call Markel Rojas at (512) 458-7111, extension 6451 or e-mail markel.rojas@dshs.state.tx.us.

