



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **North Dakota Department of Health Providing Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Vaccine for All North Dakota Adults and Adolescents for a Limited Time**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health has begun supplying tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccines to health-care providers at no cost for any adolescent or adult in need of vaccination, according to Molly Sander, Immunization Program manager for the Department of Health.

The vaccines will be provided free for a limited time to local public health units and private health-care providers enrolled in the department's Immunization Program. Health-care providers may charge a small fee to administer the vaccine to their patients.

Everyone is recommended to receive a booster dose of tetanus and diphtheria (Td) vaccine at least every 10 years. For people younger than 65, one of the booster doses should be Tdap, which also protects against pertussis (whooping cough), to help ensure they don't pass whooping cough to infants or get the disease themselves. In addition, a dose of Tdap is recommended for adolescents at ages 11 or 12 and is required for all North Dakota adolescents attending middle school.

Adults and Adolescents pass pertussis on to infants, which is why it is so important for older individuals to be vaccinated. Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory infection that causes serious disease in infants. Infants and children with the disease cough violently and rapidly, over and over, until the air is gone from their lungs and they're forced to inhale with a loud "whooping" sound.

Currently, many states are experiencing outbreaks of pertussis; in fact, five infants have died from pertussis in California this year. North Dakota experienced an outbreak in 2004, when 757 cases occurred. So far in 2010, 19 cases of pertussis have been reported in North Dakota.

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“Unfortunately, most adolescents and adults in North Dakota are not protected against pertussis,” Sander said. “In fact, only 47.8 percent of adolescents in North Dakota have received a dose of Tdap, and even fewer adults are adequately vaccinated with Tdap. In the United States in 2008, only 5.9 percent of adults ages 18 to 64 had received the vaccine.”

People interested in being vaccinated or wondering if they are up-to-date on their Td or Tdap vaccinations should contact their local public health unit or health-care provider.

For more information, contact Molly Sander, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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