

Whooping cough (pertussis)

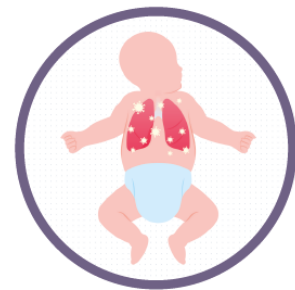


- What is whooping cough (pertussis)?
- People at risk of complications
- Situation in Quebec and Montreal
- Pregnant people
- Babies
- Immunization schedule
- What to do in case of symptoms?
- Printable tools
- Find out more
- Français

What is whooping cough (pertussis)?

It's a very contagious respiratory disease caused by a bacterium. It is often very serious in young babies. It can cause:

- A severe cough that can last several weeks
- Breathing that stops temporarily
- A lung infection
- Brain damage or death (rare)



See also:

- Video - [Connaissez-vous la coqueluche?](#), with Majorie Lavoie, a physician and head of the Santé Jeunesse unit at the [Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal](#) (DRSP) and Sarah-Jeanne Morin, a nurse clinician, at the DRSP.

Individuals at risk of complications

- **Premature** babies (born before the pregnancy comes to term)
- Babies aged **6 months or less**
- Babies aged **6 to 12 months** who haven't received **their first 3 doses** of vaccine scheduled at **2, 4 and 12 months** old, according to the immunization schedule
- **Newborns whose mothers did not receive the vaccine** at least 4 weeks before giving birth



See also:

- Video – [Understanding Whooping Cough](#), Dr. Jesse Papenburg, [Montreal Children's Hospital](#).

Situation in Quebec and Montreal

In Quebec:

- In general, there are between 240 and 1,600 cases of whooping cough each year.
- Every 2 to 5 years, there is a rise in the number of whooping cough cases.
- Currently, there is a significant increase in the number of cases. Between January 1 and October 9 2024, 16,130 cases of whooping cough were recorded.

In Montreal:

- Between January 1 and October 5 2024, 1,315 cases of whooping cough were recorded.
- Vaccine coverage is below the target level. As of August 12 2024, just over half of children aged 2 months to 4 years had been adequately vaccinated against whooping cough.

Pregnant people

Vaccination among pregnant people

- The whooping cough vaccine is **recommended during pregnancy**. It is safe for the mother and the baby. There is no live virus or bacteria in the vaccine.
- The vaccine is recommended during **each pregnancy**.
- When given at **26 weeks of pregnancy** or after:
 - The baby will be protected during their first weeks of life, when the infant is at highest risk of complications;
 - To keep being protected, the baby needs to receive their first vaccine at 2 months old.
- The vaccine given during pregnancy prevents 90% of hospitalizations (9 in 10 hospitalizations). It also prevents 95% of deaths among babies aged 3 months and under.



Babies

Upcoming testimonial from a family whose child was hospitalized with whooping cough - Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine.

Immunization schedule

- One of the best ways to protect your children against several respiratory diseases such as whooping cough is to get them vaccinated at the recommended ages.
- The whooping cough vaccine is more effective when given at the right times.
- According to the immunization schedule, it is recommended the doses be given at:

2 months ✓ 4 months ✓ 12 months ✓ 4-6 years ✓

- The whooping cough vaccine also protects children against several other diseases.

It's never too late to receive the vaccines.

- Book an appointment at [Clic-Santé](#)
or
- Call your CLSC
or
- Call 1-877-644-4545, Monday to Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

What to do in case of symptoms?

If you or your child has had a severe cough for several days,

- Call [Info-Santé 811](#)
or
- Consult a healthcare professional as needed.

The person who is sick and their loved ones may be given medication that kills bacteria (antibiotic).

To help you book an appointment with a healthcare professional, see:

- [Infections chez l'enfant : Quand et où consulter?](#) (PDF)
- The page [Il existe d'autres options que l'urgence](#)

Vaccination is still the best way to lower the risks of getting whooping cough and, in case of infection, to reduce symptoms and complications.

Printable Tools

See the page: [Conseils et prévention - Coqueluche | CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

Find out more about

Whooping cough

- [Whooping cough](#)

Respiratory infections and good habits to adopt

- [CP_InfecRespAdultesEnfants_RespiratoryInfections.pdf \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)
- [CP_InfecRespParentsJeuneEnfants_PDF-EN.pdf \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

Vaccination

- [Whooping cough vaccination for pregnant women \(gouv.qc.ca\) \(PDF\)](#)

- [Demystifying beliefs regarding the risks of vaccination | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)
- [Immunization in pregnancy | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)

Français

- ccsmtl.ca/coqueluche