



National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment  
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

*Protect your baby  
against whooping cough.  
Get your  
22-week vaccination*  
National Immunisation Programme





**Whooping cough is dangerous for babies. You can protect your baby from whooping cough by getting vaccinated yourself during your pregnancy. The vaccine is available starting from the 22nd week of your pregnancy: the 22-week vaccination. Since the vaccine is included in the National Immunisation Programme, the shot is free. Read more about it in this leaflet. If you would like more information, see the website at [rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik](https://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik).**

## What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough is also known as pertussis or the ‘100-day cough’. This extremely contagious disease is caused by a bacterial infection. The

infection leads to severe coughing fits, which can persist for months. Infants may struggle to breathe well and could actually stop breathing for a few seconds.

## Dangerous for babies

Whooping cough can be extremely dangerous for babies. They may get pneumonia or develop brain damage, and could even die from the disease. Nearly 170 infants end up in hospital with whooping cough in the Netherlands every year.

## Newborns are not protected

Infants and young children are vaccinated against whooping cough. However, they cannot get their first vaccinations until they are a few months old. That means that

newborns and very young infants are not yet protected against whooping cough during the first few months. And that is precisely when they are most vulnerable.

## How can you protect your baby?

You can get vaccinated against whooping cough yourself during your pregnancy. That ensures that your baby will be protected from the moment they enter the world. You can get the shot from the 22nd week of your pregnancy. That is why it is known as the 22-week vaccination.

## How does it work?

After you are vaccinated, your body makes antibodies. These antibodies are shared with your unborn baby via the placenta. As a result, your

baby will have enough antibodies to protect against whooping cough for the first few months. Until your baby gets his or her first vaccination. The vaccine protects your baby, but it also protects you. You won't be able to get whooping cough or infect others.

## One less shot for your baby

Another benefit: if you get vaccinated, your baby might not need to be vaccinated as often. In that case, your baby will get the first vaccination at 3 months instead of 2 months.\*

*\* Not in all cases. The doctor or nurse at the Well-Baby Clinic will discuss this with you. See also the website at [rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik](http://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik)*



## Breastfeeding

Antibodies are also provided in breast milk, but these antibodies do not protect babies against whooping cough. Even if you are planning to breastfeed later, you still need a vaccination to make sure that your infant will be well protected.

## Combined vaccine

The vaccine you will receive is the DPT shot. It not only protects you against whooping cough (pertussis), but also against two other diseases: tetanus and diphtheria. A separate vaccine against whooping cough is not available.

## Is it safe?

The vaccination is safe for you and your baby. Extensive research has been done to make sure of that. Women in other countries have been getting this

vaccination for years. That includes England, Belgium, Spain and the USA.

## Side-effects

You may have some side-effects. That includes listlessness, headache or puffiness in the arm where you get the shot. These side-effects are usually fairly mild and will go away on their own within a few days. Serious side-effects are very rare.

## Reporting a side-effect

You can report a side-effect of a vaccination to the doctor or nurse who administered the vaccination. They will pass on the report to the Lareb Pharmacovigilance Centre. You can also report the side-effect directly to Lareb via [www.lareb.nl](http://www.lareb.nl) or via the website of the National Immunisation Programme at [rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl](http://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl).

## Where?

Make an appointment with the Well-Baby Clinic to get the shot. While you are there, you will hear more about the vaccinations that your baby will be offered later via the National Immunisation Programme.

Go to the website at [rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik](http://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/22wekenprik) find out where you can make an appointment.

## When?

You can get the shot from the 22nd week of your pregnancy until your baby is born. Sooner rather than later.

## Free

The 22-week vaccination is part of the National Immunisation Programme, so it is free.

## Information about the vaccination

When you have received a vaccination, youth healthcare services record the details of the vaccination in the reporting system and on your vaccination certificate. If you agree, youth healthcare services will share the data with RIVM. The data that is shared are vaccination details and your personal details. The doctor or nurse from the youth healthcare services asks your permission to share data between the youth healthcare services and RIVM.

This permission is important. RIVM can only properly perform various tasks if it knows exactly which vaccinations you have received. For example, RIVM uses the data to send you vaccination reminders at the right time. In addition, RIVM can give you a copy of your vaccination certificate if you request it. Convenient if you are going on a trip and want to know what diseases you are vaccinated against.

RIVM also uses the information for ongoing quality assessment of the National Immunisation Programme and for vaccine monitoring. Finally, RIVM uses the data to calculate how many people in the Netherlands have received all their immunisations. If there is an outbreak of an infectious disease, it is very important to know how many people are already protected. Then RIVM can assess whether the disease will be able to spread and whether measures are necessary.

For more information, see  
[rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/jouw-toestemming](https://rijksvaccinatieprogramma.nl/jouw-toestemming)





## What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough causes **severe coughing fits**. Infants may struggle to breathe well and could actually stop breathing for a few seconds.



## How serious is it if babies get whooping cough?

Whooping cough is dangerous for newborns and very young infants. They may get **pneumonia** or develop **brain damage**.

Nearly 170 infants end up in hospital with whooping cough every year. Babies can even **die** from the disease.



## Newborns not protected



Babies will be **vaccinated** against whooping cough, but they cannot get their first vaccinations until they are **2 months** old. That means that they are **not yet protected** during the **first few months**.



## Vaccinations for pregnant women



Women can get a **vaccination** during their **pregnancy**. This helps them **protect** their baby against **whooping cough** from the moment they are born.

**And.. it means 1 less shot for your baby!**

## Safe

The vaccination is **safe** for **mother and child**.



Other countries have been giving this vaccination for years, including **England, the USA, Belgium and Spain**.



You could have some mild sideeffects, such as **listlessness, headache** or **puffiness** in the arm where you get the shot.



The vaccination is a **cocktail**. It also protects you against diphtheria and tetanus.

## When

You can get the shot from the Well-Baby Clinic starting from the **22nd week** of your pregnancy.

Be sure to make the **appointment yourself!**



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