

MOMS ASKED TO HELP WIPE OUT SERIOUS INFECTION: WHOOPING COUGH

*– New Campaign Calls on Moms to Vaccinate
Themselves and their Loved Ones Against Whooping Cough –*

BETHESDA, MD, [INSERT DATE] – Every mom wants to keep her family healthy and protected from a life-threatening infection like whooping cough. Many moms routinely wipe down countertops and wash hands to prevent the spread of germs and infection. But there is only one way to wipe out whooping cough – booster vaccination.

To raise awareness about the need for adult and adolescent booster vaccination against this potentially fatal disease, actor and mother Cheryl Hines is teaming up with the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) on the *Wipe Out the Whoop* campaign.

“As a mother, I know how scary it can be to see your baby sick – even the tiniest cough makes you worry. And anything I can do to prevent my baby from getting sick is worthwhile,” says Hines, star of HBO’s *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and several major motion pictures. “That’s why it’s so important for moms, and women thinking of becoming moms, to get a booster and urge all family members and caregivers to get vaccinated too.”

“Adults may experience symptoms such as prolonged coughing, which is sometimes so severe that it causes vomiting and broken ribs – severe cases may result in pneumonia and even hospitalization,” explains infectious disease specialist and NFID Medical Director Susan J. Rehm, MD. “We hope that by spreading the word about the importance of whooping cough booster immunization, moms will be proactive about vaccinating themselves and their families against this serious infection.”

Whooping cough, known medically as pertussis, is highly contagious and can easily spread from an infected person through close contact with others. Childhood immunity against whooping cough wears off, making adults and adolescents susceptible to becoming infected and spreading the disease. While symptoms can be debilitating in adults, whooping cough is life-threatening for infants who are not fully vaccinated. Studies indicate that, when the source of a case can be traced, moms are responsible for nearly one-third of whooping cough cases in infants.

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that adults receive a Tdap (tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis) booster for vaccination against whooping cough in place of the previously recommended Td (tetanus-diphtheria) booster, with special attention to adults in contact with infants who are under 12 months of age. Tdap also protects against tetanus and diphtheria – two potentially fatal diseases.

About Whooping Cough

Referred to by the Chinese as the “cough of 100 days,” whooping cough is a highly contagious respiratory infection characterized by a prolonged, dry cough sometimes associated with a signature “whoop” sound.

Whooping cough is the only vaccine-preventable disease on the rise in the U.S., and the dramatic rise in number of cases in recent years has led to concern among many in the medical and public health fields. In fact, there were more than 20,000 cases of whooping cough in 2004 and 2005 each year. Approximately one-third of all reported cases of pertussis are among adults whose immunity from early childhood has waned.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved two Tdap vaccines in 2005. One preparation can be used for both adolescents and adults, and the other has been approved only for use in adolescents.

About Tetanus

Tetanus, often described as “lockjaw” for the most common symptom of jaw stiffness, is caused by common bacteria that are widespread in the environment. Tetanus bacteria can enter the body through any type of open wound, including small cuts or scrapes. The most common form of tetanus causes paralysis and includes symptoms such as neck stiffness, difficulty swallowing, and muscle spasms. Symptoms of tetanus can appear anywhere from three days to three weeks after exposure to the bacteria, and may be accompanied by fever, sweating, elevated blood pressure, and rapid heartbeat.

About Diphtheria

Diphtheria is a highly contagious disease that is contracted by inhaling bacteria from an infected person. The disease is still common in 87 countries, with some strains continuing to circulate in parts of the U.S. Travel destinations where diphtheria is found include certain parts of Africa, Europe, Central America, the Caribbean, the former Soviet Republics, and Asia. Symptoms begin very much like a common cold, usually two to five days after transmission, but can progress quickly. In some cases, a membrane grows and covers the throat, which can block the airway. The infection can lead to heart failure and paralysis, and, if enough toxin from the membrane is absorbed into the bloodstream, coma or even death can occur in as little as a week.

NFID and the *Wipe Out the Whoop* Campaign

Founded in 1973, NFID is a non-profit organization dedicated to public and professional educational programs about and in support of research into the causes, treatment, and prevention of infectious diseases. To promote public awareness about whooping cough risks and prevention, NFID created the *Wipe Out the Whoop* campaign. The campaign focuses on the importance receiving a Tdap vaccine to protect adults and adolescents from whooping cough.

Campaign initiatives include television and radio public service announcements featuring Cheryl Hines, pertussis information on the NFID web site and a pamphlet to help people understand the importance of adult and adolescent immunization against whooping cough. For more information about the *Wipe Out the Whoop* campaign, pertussis and preventive vaccination, visit the NFID web site at www.nfid.org.

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MOMS ASKED TO HELP WIPE OUT WHOOPING COUGH

Medical advances in recent history have all but eliminated many of the worst diseases of the 20th century. However, whooping cough - a highly contagious, life-threatening infection - continues to be a problem. Whooping cough is the only vaccine-preventable infection on the rise in the U.S. and, unlike years ago, most cases today are among adults and teens.

To raise awareness about the need for adult and adolescent booster vaccination, actor and mother Cheryl Hines is teaming up with the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) on the *Wipe Out the Whoop* campaign.

“As an actor and a mom, I juggle many activities so it’s important for me to stay healthy. When I asked my doctor about whooping cough, he said it may take months to recover and cause fitful sleep,” says Hines, star of HBO’s *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and several major motion pictures. “I won’t put my life on hold for an infection that can be prevented with a simple booster vaccination.”

Whooping cough can be a terrible burden at any age. According to infectious disease specialist and NFID Medical Director Susan J. Rehm, MD, “Adults may experience symptoms such as prolonged coughing, which is sometimes so severe that it causes vomiting and broken ribs – severe cases may result in pneumonia and even hospitalization.”

Adults and teens become susceptible to whooping cough as immunizations from early childhood wanes. Once a person is infected, the illness is easily transmitted to those within close contact. While symptoms can be debilitating in adults, whooping cough is life-threatening for infants who are not fully vaccinated. Studies indicate that, when the source of a case can be traced, moms are responsible for nearly one-third of whooping cough cases in infants.

“As a mother, I know how scary it can be to see your baby sick – even the tiniest cough makes you worry. And anything I can do to prevent my baby from getting sick is worthwhile,” says Hines. “That’s why it’s so important for moms, and women thinking of becoming moms, to get a booster and urge all family members and caregivers to get vaccinated too.”

What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough, known medically as pertussis, is a highly contagious disease caused by exposure to airborne bacteria. The name “whooping cough” is derived from the signature “whoop” sound that sometimes accompanies an infected individual’s cough.

The dramatic rise in the number of whooping cough cases in recent years has led to concern among many in the medical and public health fields. There were more than 20,000 cases of whooping cough in 2004 and 2005 each year. Approximately one-third of all reported cases of pertussis are among adults whose immunity from early childhood has waned.

Health officials advise adults under 65 years of age to receive a Tdap (tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis) booster for vaccination against whooping cough in place of the previously recommended Td (tetanus-diphtheria) booster. Adults in contact with infants under 12 months of age – parents, grandparents, caregivers – are especially encouraged to consider booster vaccination. Tdap also protects against tetanus and diphtheria – two potentially fatal diseases.

What can I do to protect my family?

The NFID encourages moms to be proactive about vaccinating themselves and their families against this serious infection.

“Talk to your doctor about getting vaccinated,” urges Dr. Rehm. “If your doctor hasn’t heard about the new vaccine, ask her to contact the manufacturer. It could save not only medical expenses, but lives.”

For more information about pertussis, visit www.nfid.org.

2006 Wipe Out the Whoop Campaign Spokesperson Message Points

OPENING CAMPAIGN MESSAGE:

Whooping cough is a problem that never really went away in the U.S. In fact, it's now the only vaccine-preventable infection on the rise. The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) and actor/mom Cheryl Hines are calling on all moms to Wipe Out the Whoop – stay healthy and protect your baby by getting a booster to protect against whooping cough.

Medical Expert:

- Whooping cough rates among adults continue to rise because childhood immunity has worn off.
 - About one-third of all reported cases of whooping cough are among adults.
- Adults may experience symptoms such as prolonged coughing, which is sometimes so severe that it causes vomiting and broken ribs.
 - It may take months to recover from whooping cough and adults may have fitful sleep and miss work days.
- Adults and adolescents can pass whooping cough to vulnerable infants, who are more at risk for severe whooping cough, serious complications and death.
 - For infected infants less than a year old, one study found that mothers were the source of almost one-third of the cases and other family members were the source of 43%.
- Whooping cough, known medically as pertussis, is a highly contagious disease caused by exposure to airborne bacteria. When someone with whooping cough coughs, the disease is easily transferred to those nearby.

Cheryl Hines:

- As an actor and a mom, I juggle many activities so it's important for me to stay healthy, including making sure I am vaccinated against infectious diseases such as whooping cough.
- Active moms, like me, want to prevent whooping cough by getting a booster vaccine. It's a serious infection that may take months to recover from and can cause you to cough so hard you could crack a rib or get pneumonia.
- The number of whooping cough cases has been increasing in recent years – especially among adults and teens whose childhood immunity has worn off.
- It's important for moms – and even those thinking about being moms – to get the whooping cough booster and urge everyone who spends time around their baby to get it too.

Rosemary Harboldt:

- Like every grandmother, I want to enjoy as much time as possible with my grandchild(ren). That's why I strive to stay healthy and that includes being current with vaccinations like whooping cough to prevent infection.
- When Cheryl was a baby, we would worry about her catching serious infectious diseases, like whooping cough, from visiting friends and relatives. Back then, the options for protecting children were limited. Now, adults and teens can protect themselves against whooping cough with a booster vaccine.
- I encourage grandparents to talk to their doctor about whooping cough vaccination. Protect yourself, your baby and your entire family from whooping cough by getting a booster.

CLOSING CAMPAIGN MESSAGE:

I urge all moms to talk to their healthcare provider about receiving a whooping cough booster for themselves and their loved ones. **For more information, visit www.nfid.org or talk to your healthcare provider.**