



# County of Santa Cruz



## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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**Public Health**  
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### Community Health and Prevention Programs

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## New Rule Before School! Vaccines Now Required for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Santa Cruz County— Beginning July 1, 2011, all students entering grades 7-12 must provide proof of having immunization against whooping cough ('Tdap') before starting school. In light of California's recent whooping cough (also known as pertussis) epidemic, there is no reason to wait for the new school year. Health professionals encourage parents to have their children vaccinated with the whooping cough booster shot, Tdap, now in order to protect them against whooping cough and to meet the 2011-12 school requirements.

Doctors remind us that the protection from baby shots wears off, and adolescents may be at risk for serious diseases that can be easily spread, like whooping cough. Parents are urged to schedule a check-up with their child's doctor now and make sure their immunizations are up-to-date.

"It's important that preteens and teens see the doctor and get immunized to meet the new immunization requirement and stay healthy," said Dr. Poki Namkung, Health Officer for the County of Santa Cruz. "Immunity received from childhood vaccines can wane overtime, exposing a child to serious diseases that could easily spread, leading to missed weeks of school or worse. There are also numerous vaccines that are now recommended for this age group."

There are several important vaccines recommended for preteens and teens including Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough), the meningococcal vaccine, a second chickenpox shot (if they never had chickenpox disease), and the HPV vaccine series. And everyone older than 6 months old is recommended to receive a seasonal flu vaccine.

If a child does not have health insurance, or is only partially insured, the doctor or your local health department can provide information about the Vaccines for Children Program which provides no- or low-cost vaccines.

"Protecting the health of California's youth is one of our most urgent priorities," said Dr. Namkung. "Preteen Vaccine Week is part of our commitment to ensuring our kids receive all the benefits immunizations can provide."

For more information, please visit [www.santacruzhealth.org](http://www.santacruzhealth.org) or [www.GetImmunizedCA.org](http://www.GetImmunizedCA.org).

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