

Fall 2012 Town of Lincoln Vaccination Clinic

This is a reminder to all Rhode Islanders to make sure you and your family are up-to-date on your vaccinations. You are encouraged to contact your doctor (and your children's doctors) to ensure your vaccinations are up-to-date. If you are unable to see your doctor, **a public vaccination clinic will run in the Town of Lincoln on Saturday, December 15, 2012 from 10:00am to 1:00pm at the Lincoln High School, 135 Old River Road, Lincoln, RI.** This clinic is being run by Town of Lincoln in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Health as a preparedness exercise. It will assist emergency responders and public safety officials in the Town of Lincoln to prepare for the distribution of medication or vaccine in the event of an actual public health emergency. More importantly, it is a chance for you and the members of your family to get these very important vaccinations.

- **Tdap** (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) vaccine protects against pertussis (also known as “whooping cough”) and will be **available for everyone 11 years of age and older**. There has been a nationwide increase in pertussis cases, with small clusters in Rhode Island this year. Pertussis is a contagious disease that can cause illness and sometimes death, especially in infants.
 - **Anyone 19 years and older** and especially those who are in close contact with an infant should get a Tdap vaccination if they have not previously received one. Tdap has only been licensed since 2005 so many adults have not yet received this vaccine.
 - **Tdap is required for students before they enter seventh grade.** Students who participate in the clinic will meet the vaccination requirement for seventh grade enrollment.
 - **Pregnant women must be at least 20 weeks into their pregnancies** to receive Tdap vaccine.
- **Flu** vaccine will help you avoid the seasonal flu this year. **Everyone older than six months of age**, even those who are healthy, needs a flu shot every year. It is especially important for pregnant women and people who have chronic illnesses to get vaccinated now. The flu hits Rhode Island hardest in January and February every year. The flu vaccine will be available in the form of a shot or FluMist (nasal spray).
- **Pneumococcal** vaccine prevents pneumonia. **People ages 65 and older should get this vaccine**, but it is **especially important for everyone 19 years and older who smokes or has asthma to get vaccinated.**

There is no out-of-pocket cost for these vaccinations. Anyone who is insured should bring his or her insurance card; however, health insurance is not a requirement for vaccination. No one will be turned away for a lack of health insurance.

If you have any questions about vaccines, contact the Rhode Island Department of Health at (401) 222-5960 / RI Relay 711 or visit www.health.ri.gov/immunization/. **If you have questions about the clinic, please contact the Rescue Deputy Chief, Ronald K. Gagne, Sr. at 333-8455.**

Make sure you and your family are protected.

FREE
VACCINATION CLINIC

For vaccinations, visit your doctor or go to the public clinic listed below.

The following vaccines will be available

- ▶ FLU • Protects against seasonal flu
 - For ages 6 months and older
- ▶ TDAP • Protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough)
 - For ages 11 and older (especially for those in contact with infants)
- ▶ PNEUMOCOCCAL
 - Protects against pneumonia
 - For all adults, ages 19 and older AND who smoke or have asthma
 - For all adults, ages 65 and older

There is no out-of-pocket cost to be vaccinated. If you have health insurance, please bring your insurance card.

Date: **Saturday, December 15, 2012**

Time: **10:00 am to 1:00 pm**

Location: **Lincoln High School, 135 Old River Rd**

The Facts about Pertussis (“Whooping Cough”)

What is pertussis and the symptoms?

Pertussis (whooping cough) is a contagious infection that affects the lungs and breathing passages. The dry cough can last one to six weeks or more and cause coughing fits and trouble breathing. Pertussis usually starts with cold-like symptoms, such as coughing, sneezing, and a runny nose. It’s often diagnosed after a cough lasts more than one to two weeks.

The cough is usually not harmful to adults and older children, but can be dangerous for babies. Sometimes children have a hard time catching their breath. It’s not unusual for children to spit up, vomit, or be exhausted after coughing. Infants might also have breathing problems or develop serious medical conditions such as pneumonia, seizures, and brain damage.

Pertussis is also known as “whooping cough” because of the “whoop” sound children or other patients sometimes make during coughing.

How do people get pertussis?

A bacteria causes pertussis and it’s usually spread by coughing or sneezing when people are in close contact. Infants often get pertussis from older brothers and sisters, parents, or other caregivers who might not even know they have it.

How can pertussis be prevented?

The best way to protect adults, children, and babies from pertussis is to get the recommended vaccine and booster shots, which are safe.

Vaccines are first given at two months of age, then again at four, six, and 15-18 months, and again between four to six years old. A booster shot also is recommended for children by age 11. **In Rhode Island, Grade 7 students are required to get this booster.** Teens and adults who haven’t yet received their boosters should get one as soon as possible. When in doubt about whether you’re up-to-date on your shots, speak with a doctor to find out what’s best for you and your family.

Keep anyone with a cough away from babies and newborns. Also make sure everyone who comes in contact with infants is up-to-date on their shots.

How is pertussis treated?

See a doctor or the school nurse when pertussis symptoms first appear. If you or your child has trouble breathing, seek medical attention right away.

Tell the doctor or school nurse if you or your child has been around others with a cough or cold, or if you’ve heard about others with pertussis in your community.

Your doctor might prescribe an antibiotic treatment to help speed up recovery and to prevent the disease from spreading to others.

Babies often are hospitalized when treated for pertussis.