

## Protect yourself and your family

### Whooping cough (pertussis)

NZ currently has a significant outbreak of Pertussis. Hutt Valley had 341 cases in 2012, compared with 35 in 2010, and 24 new cases since the beginning of this year. It can be particularly serious in children under 12 months as they are more at risk of serious complications as they struggle to breathe. In very severe cases, it can cause brain damage and death.



Also known as whooping cough and sometimes referred to as the '100 day cough', pertussis is highly infectious. It usually starts with a cold and irritating cough, but develops into spasms of coughing which may end with vomiting, or with a 'whooping' sound. Complications can include pneumonia, ear infections, and burst blood vessels.

Whooping cough is spread by coughing and sneezing. Babies often catch it from older siblings or parents and grandparents – often before they are old enough to be fully vaccinated. Adults have lesser symptoms and may not realise they have the disease, and protection from childhood vaccination or previous infection is not life long.

On-time immunisation for infants at 6 weeks, 3 and 5 months in addition to children receiving boosters at four and 11 years is the best prevention. Immunisation is free to all children and is available free up to the age of 18. Since January 2013, pregnant women between 28-38 weeks gestation are eligible for free Boostrix (the vaccine against whooping cough).

If a pregnant woman has high levels of circulating protection against whooping cough during the last weeks of pregnancy some of this will pass through the placenta and protect the newborn from severe whooping cough for up to 6 weeks after delivery.

Pregnant women can safely receive the Boostrix vaccine from 20 weeks gestation, and due to the current epidemic, the vaccine will temporarily be free for women between 28-38 weeks gestation. It is strongly recommended that partners, grandparents and anyone in regular contact with infants also receive the vaccine, although these are not government funded.

### Get immunised on time

Immunisation is the most effective way to actively protect your child from vaccine preventable diseases, such as whooping cough, tetanus and measles. As babies are the most vulnerable to these diseases, the safest and most effective way to ensure their good health is to protect them from getting the diseases at all. The immunisation schedule is structured to provide the best protection for our children when they are most at risk. It is very important to vaccinate on time, to ensure their immune systems

have the opportunity to develop protection from these diseases before they are exposed. Talk to your midwife, doctor, nurse, Plunket or Tamariki Ora nurse. They can answer any questions you have.

Age	Diseases Covered and Vaccines
6 weeks	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough/Polio/Hepatitis B/Haemophilus influenzae B - (1 injection) Pneumococcal - (1 injection)
3 months	Same as above
5 months	Same as above
15 months	Haemophilus influenzae B (1 injection) Measles/Mumps/Rubella (1 injection) Pneumococcal (1 injection)
4 years	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough/Polio (1 injection) Measles/Mumps/Rubella (1 injection)
11 years	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough (1 injection)
12 years	Girls only - Human Papillomavirus 3 doses given over six months GARDASIL
45 years	Diphtheria/Tetanus (1 injection)
65 years	Diphtheria/Tetanus (1 injection) Influenza (annually)

**Congratulations! Hutt Valley has a high rate of fully immunised children. Over the last three months 95% of 8 month old babies were immunised and 96% of those 24 months old.**

## DHB seeks best value from health dollars

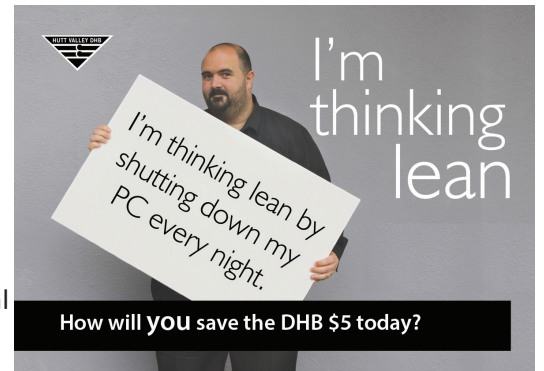
Hutt Valley DHB knew this year would be a challenge financially, as we pay off our lovely new buildings and cope with extra costs related to earthquake strengthening and insurance. Staff have made great strides in improving efficiency, minimising waste and making best use of resources, but unplanned costs and higher than usual demand for services over summer mean the DHB needs to take extra steps to come within budget this year.

"We're launching a challenge called 'I'm thinking lean' to staff and already, more ideas have surfaced about how we can reduce waste, or improve patient experiences while saving time and money," says CE Graham Dyer. "We've challenged staff to each find \$5 a day in savings – through improving quality, avoiding costs, or making better use of resources. At the same time, we have introduced much tighter controls on spending, as we try and reduce our overall costs by 5% over the next 5 months. We've limited the amount of overtime available, are careful to rotate stock so it gets used before it expires, reduced waste disposal costs through improved recycling, and cut 'frills' spending like news papers and magazines for clinics and catering for meetings – our Board members brought their own morning tea to the last meeting to show their support for the measures."

Other measures include managing high levels of annual leave owed, sharing staff and resources between work areas, and managing any vacancies that arise.

### What can you do to help?

Members of the community can help too, by either turning up for appointments or letting us know they can't come (566 6999) so we can fill the space with another patient, avoiding wasted time – which costs money. You can also make a difference by helping to keep yourself and others well as winter approaches – have that flu vaccination, keep an eye on elderly neighbours, wash your hands often, and see your GP or phone healthline (0800 611 116) early if you become unwell!



### Got time to spare on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays?

The Hutt Hospital Foundation Shop (in the hospital front foyer) is seeking more volunteers for their shop and shop trolley rosters.  
email HHH.trust.shop@gmail.com or phone 04 587 2804

### Influenza

Now is the time to start thinking about getting immunised against influenza this year.

The influenza virus doesn't care how fit, active or healthy you are. It's a contagious virus and anyone can catch it, even the healthiest people.

Influenza is more than just a bad cold. Symptoms include a cough, headache, fever or chills, body aches and pains, fatigue and generally feeling miserable.

Influenza can lead to serious complications, particularly in people with existing medical conditions such as heart or lung conditions. Complications include pneumonia, heart failure and worsening asthma.

The vaccine is free for everyone 65+ years, pregnant woman, and those with existing medical conditions – please check with your GP for further information.

The 2013 influenza vaccine protects against the strain of pandemic (H1N1) influenza that circulated in 2009 and 2010, the H3N2 influenza that has caused an epidemic in the US, and another circulating strain.

### Measles

The recent measles outbreak is a reminder about the importance of immunisation in protecting our community. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is available free at 15 months and 4 years and to anyone born after 1969. Two doses give 90 to 95% protection. Check your immunisations are up to date to make sure you are protected against measles. If you are behind schedule, it's never too late to catch up. Contact your GP now.

### Not an emergency? See your GP



Call your GP for advice - even if they're closed you'll be put through to a helpline.

Or call Healthline 0800 611 116

### CHOOSE WELL

#### After Hours Medical Centre :

- 5.30pm - 11pm weekdays
- 8am - 11pm weekends & public holidays

#### Upper Hutt Health Centre after hours clinic

- 5pm - 8am weekdays.
- weekends from 9am - 1pm and 2pm-6pm