



**SFIC** San Francisco  
Immunization  
Coalition  
*"Protecting the Health of ALL San Franciscans"*

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**The San Francisco Immunization Coalition and the  
San Francisco Giants Announce  
*PERTUSSIS PREVENTION NIGHT*  
at AT&T Park – Monday, August 23**

*Vaccination against pertussis to be offered to entire crowd at  
Giants game; Mom who lost her son to disease to speak about  
importance of vaccination*

SAN FRANCISCO – California is seeing an epidemic of pertussis, commonly called whooping cough. There are about seven times as many cases as there were last year. To date, eight infants have died from the disease, all younger than three months. The Latino community has been impacted severely, with all of the eight deaths occurring in Latino families.

Although babies are routinely immunized against pertussis, they are not protected until they receive at least three doses, usually around 6 months of age. Infants younger than 6 months of age are most vulnerable to infection from people around them – family members and friends may have a cough but don't realize they could be spreading a deadly disease.

To bring attention to the need for pertussis vaccination, the San Francisco Immunization Coalition, the San Francisco Giants, and Catholic Healthcare West are proud to present "Pertussis Prevention Night" on Monday, August 23, at AT&T Park. Bay Area resident Mariah Bianchi will speak about losing her infant son, Dylan Cruz, to pertussis. Bianchi has recently appeared on two national television shows to tell her story and encourage people to receive a Tdap shot to

protect against pertussis. “I don’t want anybody’s family to suffer the way ours has.” *Dylan’s Story* is among the personal stories featured on [www.shotbyshot.org](http://www.shotbyshot.org), a website that features stories of those affected by vaccine-preventable diseases.

In addition to bringing attention to the epidemic, the event will allow Giants fans to go home protected against pertussis. Free Tdap shots will be offered to all adults at the game, thanks to the San Francisco Department of Public Health and Catholic Healthcare West. (Children age 10 and over who are accompanied by adults may also be vaccinated.)

San Francisco Giants players Pablo “the Panda” Sandoval and Sergio Romo are helping with the pertussis awareness campaign. Both are featured in Public Service Announcements that will be unveiled at the event. The bi-lingual announcements, which educate the public on symptoms of pertussis and urge immunization for close contacts of newborns, will be distributed widely across Northern California to spread awareness about the disease and vaccination. “I enjoy striking out batters, and I want to help strike out pertussis and protect all the kids,” said Romo.

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***The San Francisco Immunization Coalition (SFIC)*** is a non-profit organization whose mission is to achieve and maintain full immunization protection for each child and adult in San Francisco in order to promote community health and prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases. Additional information about SFIC can be found at [www.sfimmunize.org](http://www.sfimmunize.org).

#### IMPORTANT MESSAGES:

- Get your children immunized against pertussis. DTaP is for infants and children through age 6 years.
- Children ages 7-9 whom did not complete their DTaP 5-shot series should get the Tdap booster vaccine now
- Tdap is especially important for pregnant mothers and families of babies.
- Protection from the vaccine can fade, so if it’s been 10 years since vaccination against pertussis, it’s time for a booster. Adolescents and adults over 10 years of age should receive the Tdap vaccine booster now.
- People who have had pertussis can get it again after several years and also need a booster.
- Call the Immunization Information Info. Line for referrals to a local immunization clinic: 415.206.5000.