

## Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Information

In light of the current situation regarding pertussis in a surrounding county we wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with some educational materials regarding pertussis and some tips that you can use to help promote healthy habits to prevent the spread of this and other illness.

1. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which provides advice and guidance to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, recommends the Tdap booster shot (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) to those aged 11 - 18 before entering high school and to adults aged 19 to 64 if they have not had a tetanus shot in the last ten years. Parents are encouraged to keep younger children up to date on immunizations including DTaP as well.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm>

For more information including the pertussis Q and A sheet attached and on addressing vaccine concerns please visit [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org).

2. Know the facts about Pertussis illness:

Early diagnosis is the key. Pertussis is highly contagious and is easily spread from person to person. Covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing will reduce spreading pertussis. An infected person is contagious from just before symptoms begin to 21 days after symptoms occur. The first symptoms are similar to those of a common cold - runny nose, sneezing, low-grade fever and a mild, occasional nonproductive cough. The cough gradually becomes severe and, after 1 to 2 weeks, an individual will have bursts of numerous, rapid coughs. If you exhibit these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

Treatment with antibiotics shortens the contagious period to about five days.

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/pertussis\\_t.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/pertussis_t.htm)

3. Help encourage healthy habits to help prevent the spread of pertussis and other respiratory illnesses The best way to prevent pertussis is by vaccination.

Also:

-Clean your hands.

Washing your hands (or using an alcohol-based hand cleaner )often will help protect you from germs.

-Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

-Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

-Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick.

-Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

-Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Thank you for your work in helping prevent pertussis and other illness.

Center Area School Nurses