



## **Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Case Confirmed in Hill County**

As of January 7, 2025 there has been one confirmed case of pertussis reported in Hill County. The Hill County Health Department wants you to know how to best protect yourself and your family from pertussis.

Pertussis is a contagious disease that affects the upper respiratory tract (throat and lungs) of those it attacks. Pertussis can occur at any age but is one of the most deadly diseases of infants and young children of our time, and is highly contagious.

The first step we must take as a community to prevent the spread of this disease is to make sure everyone that is not currently vaccinated against pertussis gets their immunization as soon as possible. The vaccine for pertussis is given in combination with diphtheria and tetanus.

The schedule/recommendations for vaccination are:

- Birth through 6 years: DTaP is routinely given at 2, 4, and 6 months, at 15 – 18 months, and at 4 – 6 years.
- 7 – 10 years: Single dose of Tdap for those not fully vaccinated with DTaP.
- 11 – 18 years: Tdap is routinely given as a single dose for those 11 – 18 years of age.
- 19 years and older: Adults who have not received a dose of Tdap should get one as soon as possible to protect themselves as well as infants they may be around.
- Pregnant Women: Pregnant women should receive a dose of Tdap during each pregnancy, preferably at 27 through 36 weeks gestation to hopefully provide passive immunity to their child that will protect them in early life.

Pertussis usually begins as a mild upper respiratory infection. Initially, symptoms resemble those of a common cold, including sneezing, runny nose, low-grade fever and a mild cough. Within two weeks, the cough becomes more severe and is characterized by episodes of numerous rapid coughs followed by a crowing or high pitched whoop. A thick, clear mucus may be discharged by coughing. These episodes may continue or recur for one to two months, and are more frequent at night. Older people or children who have received some pertussis vaccine generally have milder symptoms.

It is especially important that parents monitor their children for cough like illness and ideally withhold them from school/daycare until it has been determined that they do not have pertussis. Individuals who have been exposed to the confirmed case of pertussis have been contacted by public health.

If you would like to check your immunization record to see if you have been vaccinated against pertussis, or have questions, please call the Hill County Health Department at 400-2415, or your health care provider.