



CHIPPEWA COUNTY
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Chippewa County
Department of Public Health

711 N Bridge Street Room 121
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
715-726-7900 or 800-400-3678

TO: Parent or Guardian 8th grade Volleyball Team

FROM: Jen Rombalski, Chippewa County Health Officer

Your child may have been exposed to pertussis (whooping cough). Since September 26, 2014, the Chippewa County Department of Public Health has seen an increased number of pertussis cases in Cornell Middle/High School. Pertussis is an infection that affects the airways and is easily spread from person to person by coughing or sneezing. Its severe cough can last for weeks or months, sometimes leading to coughing fits and/or vomiting. Anyone can get pertussis, but it can be very dangerous for infants and people with weakened immune systems. Family members with pertussis, especially mothers, can spread pertussis to newborns.

Recommendations:

1. If your child has a cough:
 - Keep your child home from school and activities, such as sports or play groups. See items 4 and 5 about when your child can return to these activities.
 - Make an appointment with your child's doctor as soon as possible and tell the doctor that your child may have been exposed to pertussis. (see reverse side)
2. If your child has been told by a doctor that they have a weakened immune system, it is recommended that your child be prescribed antibiotics to your child as soon as possible to prevent pertussis. Antibiotics should be given to a child with a weakened immune system if they may have been exposed to pertussis, even if he or she is not coughing.
3. If your child lives with any of the following people and may have been exposed to pertussis, ask your child's doctor to prescribe antibiotics as soon as possible to your child, even if he or she is not coughing:
 - A woman who is pregnant,
 - An infant younger than 12 months old, or
 - Anyone with a weakened immune system.
4. If your child has been diagnosed with pertussis by his or her doctor:
 - Tell the school that your child has been diagnosed with pertussis.
 - School officials may request that you keep your child home from school and activities, such as sports or play groups, until your child has been on antibiotics for five days to treat pertussis.
 - Ask your child's doctor for a note that states your child has pertussis.
5. If your child's doctor says your child does NOT have pertussis:
 - Ask for a note from the doctor telling the school that your child's cough is NOT pertussis and that your child can return to school and other activities at any time.

Please make sure your family's vaccinations are up-to-date. To check your family's immunization record visit www.dhswir.org. Protection against pertussis from the childhood vaccine, DTaP, decreases over time. Older children and adults, including pregnant women, should get a pertussis booster shot called "Tdap" to protect themselves and infants near or around them. If you need the Tdap vaccine, contact your doctor or call Chippewa County Department of Public Health for assistance with getting a Tdap vaccination.

If you bring your child to a doctor for pertussis, please show the reverse side of this letter to him or her. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at Chippewa County Department of Public Health at 715-726-7900.



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Dear Medical Provider:

Your patient may have been exposed to pertussis.

For Exposed Patients WITHOUT Symptoms:

As a precaution to protect vulnerable individuals, we are recommending antibiotic prophylaxis for this patient if he or she shares a household with a woman who is pregnant, an infant less than 12 months old, or someone with a weakened immune system (including the exposed individual has a weakened immune system).

For Exposed Patients WITH Symptoms:

As [insert public health entity] continues to work with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we have developed the following guidelines for assessing and treating patients at this time:

For patients coughing LESS THAN 21 days:

1. Collect nasopharyngeal swabs or aspirate for pertussis PCR testing and/or culture.
2. Do not delay treatment with appropriate antibiotics while waiting for laboratory results if there is if no alternative diagnosis.
3. Document and communicate all clinical decisions related to pertussis to the school (this includes children for whom pertussis has been ruled out).
4. Strongly consider antibiotic prophylaxis for all household members if a pregnant woman, an infant less than 12 months old, or anyone with a weakened immune system lives in the household.

For patients coughing GREATER THAN/EQUAL TO 21 days:

1. Testing for pertussis is not recommended. Testing after 3 weeks of cough is of limited benefit since PCR and culture are only sensitive during the first 2-3 weeks of cough when bacterial DNA is still present in the nasopharynx.
2. Treatment is no longer necessary after 21 days, with the following exception: infants and pregnant women in their third trimester should be treated up through 6 weeks after cough onset.
3. The patient is no longer infectious and can return to school.

For all households: Administer Tdap vaccine to contacts 11 years and older who have not been previously vaccinated with Tdap, or refer for vaccination at Chippewa County Department of Public Health.

Additional clinical and laboratory guidance may be found on the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis>.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please call Chippewa County Department of Public Health at 715-726-7900.