



**CHIPPEWA COUNTY**  
**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

October 10, 2014

## Chippewa County Department of Public Health

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Website: [www.co.chippewa.wi.us/ccdph](http://www.co.chippewa.wi.us/ccdph) Email: [health@co.chippewa.wi.us](mailto:health@co.chippewa.wi.us)

### Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Notice

TO: Parents and Staff at Cornell Middle/High School  
FROM: Jen Rombalski, Chippewa County Health Officer

Several cases of pertussis have been confirmed at the Cornell Middle/High School. The school is working in conjunction with the Chippewa County Department of Public Health to try to prevent any further infections.

The Health Department follows protocols established by experts at the State Division of Public Health for all communicable diseases. During the course of investigations, the Health Department remains in contact with these experts. Each individual situation is analyzed to determine the appropriate follow-up needed for those who may have been exposed to the individual who is ill.

Pertussis bacteria are spread by contact with the respiratory droplets from an infected person who is coughing. Exposure usually occurs after direct face-to-face contact for a prolonged period of time in a shared confined space. The Health Department is in the process of contacting all individuals who were determined to be face-to-face contacts of the ill individual.

This letter is sent to you only as a general reminder of the signs and symptoms of pertussis (whooping cough). Should you or your family members experience the symptoms listed below, you are encouraged to contact your physician for evaluation.

### Symptoms of Pertussis

Pertussis begins with cold-like symptoms (runny nose, sneezing) and an occasional cough which becomes much worse over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms usually include a long series of coughs followed by a whooping noise. However older children, adults, and very young infants may not develop the whoop. There is generally no fever or only a low-grade fever. People with pertussis may have a series of coughs followed by vomiting, turning blue, or difficulty catching their breath. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help to alleviate the cough. The disease is most serious in unimmunized infants and preschoolers or older adults.

If you have further questions regarding pertussis or immunizations for children who have not already received the pertussis vaccine as part of their childhood immunization series, contact the Public Health Intake Nurse at 726-7900.