



## Recommendations for Pertussis Exposures in Educational Settings

The following are guidelines recommended by the Monterey County Health Department for controlling the spread of pertussis (whooping cough) in educational settings:

### 1. Immediately exclude symptomatic individuals (persistent cough) from school until:

- 1) diagnosed with pertussis and adequately treated with antibiotics for at least 5 days, or
- 2) diagnosed with pertussis and not treated, cannot return before 2 weeks after coughing first began, or
- 3) return with a medical provider's note indicating they are not infectious and can return to school, or
- 4) asymptomatic for at least 24 hours (no cough for 24 hours).

*Unlike influenza, presence or absence of fever cannot be used to identify infectious individuals.*

### 2. Confirm the diagnosis of pertussis.

- Ask the child's parent/guardian for the name of the medical provider who diagnosed pertussis. Call the Health Department (831-755-4521) with the child's name, date of birth, and diagnosing provider's name. The Health Department will assist you in verifying the diagnosis.

### 3. Identify close contacts.

- Individuals whom meet any of the following criteria should be considered exposed:
  - Those who have had direct contact with respiratory, oral, or nasal secretions from the case.
    - Coughing or sneezing directly in the face
    - Sharing food/eating utensils
    - Kissing
  - Those who have shared a confined space in close proximity for at least 1 hour with the case (e.g., carpool).

### 4. Encourage pertussis vaccination.

- Immunity can wane in adolescence; therefore, anyone  $\geq 10$  years of age who has not received a dose of Tdap may be susceptible.

### 5. Follow the school's protocol for informing parents.

- Your school should have an established protocol for informing parents of possible classroom exposures. Individuals at high risk for severe pertussis and adverse outcomes include infants <6 months of age, pregnant or postpartum women, unimmunized infants and children, and immunocompromised individuals.
- Exposed close contacts should be advised to consult their private medical providers about possible exposure to pertussis.

### 6. Actively monitor students and staff for signs of illness.

- Close contacts should be monitored for signs and symptoms of pertussis for 21 days after the last exposure.
  - Onset of cold-like symptoms (fever may be absent or minimal) followed by coughing with increased severity
- Send symptomatic students and staff home immediately.
- Advise symptomatic individuals to consult with their medical providers.

### 7. Encourage proper hand and cough hygiene to limit the spread of illness.

### 8. Immediately report any additional suspected cases of pertussis in the same classroom/setting to the Health Department (831-755-4521).