



Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Safer and Healthier Grant County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11/19/10

TO: Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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Whooping Cough (Pertussis) Outbreak Continues 25 Cases in Grant County

Grant County, WA - The Grant County Health District has investigated 25 cases of Whooping Cough as well as 262 people who came in contact with those cases since August 23. The individuals with Pertussis live in Moses Lake, Ephrata and Quincy with ages ranging from infant to adult. "Pertussis is highly contagious and can be passed to those who have close contact with an ill person, like family members" says Carol Schimke, Public Health Nurse at the Grant County Health District.

If you think you or your child has Pertussis:

- Call your health care provider and make arrangements to be seen.
- It is critical that the patient being seen wears a mask BEFORE entering any medical facility. You may also be asked to use a different entrance. Please follow your health care provider's instructions, for your safety and for the safety of those in the medical facility.
- If you use the walk-in, urgent care clinic or emergency room call the facility BEFORE you enter to get instructions.

If you think you've been exposed to Pertussis:

- Call the Grant County Health District at 509-766-7960 and speak to one of the public health nurses.
- Do not go directly to your health care provider's office. Call and make arrangements to be seen.
- Keep the individual away from other family members until they are seen by the health care provider. Most people get infected with Pertussis by a family member.
- The individual should not attend school, child care or work until they are seen by their health care provider.
- If you do have symptoms of Pertussis call your health care provider and follow the above instructions.

If you are tested and/or treated for Pertussis:

- Stay home. Do not attend school, child care, work, church or any gathering until your test results come back. This could be for as long as 5-7 days.

- While on treatment and/or waiting for test results it's important to protect others until treatment is completed.
 - Do not allow visitors into the home.
 - Try to isolate the sick person from others, especially infants and unvaccinated persons. For example, sleeping in a separate room and separate meal times.
 - Limit travel to medical visits and emergencies and if possible have the sick person wear a mask.
- If you are given antibiotics it is very important that you complete the entire prescription.

What are the symptoms of Pertussis?

Pertussis symptoms have two stages.

The first stage (which lasts 1 to 2 weeks) begins like a cold, with a runny nose, sneezing, mild fever, and cough which slowly gets worse.

The second stage is marked by uncontrolled coughing spells and a whooping noise (in young children) when the person inhales. During severe coughing spells, a person may vomit or become blue in the face from lack of air. Between coughing spells, the person often appears to be well. The coughing spells may be so bad that it is hard for babies to eat, drink or breathe. This coughing stage may last for 6 or more weeks. Adults, teens, and vaccinated children often have milder symptoms that mimic bronchitis or asthma. Some infants may only have apnea (failure to breathe), and may die from this.

For the latest information on Pertussis in Grant County please visit:

www.granthealth.org/pertussis.html

Attached is the Pertussis Family Checklist.

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