



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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11/18/2010	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT
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ALERT: Health Officer Requests Increased Pertussis Surveillance in Grant County Schools and Childcares

On October 29 Grant County Health Officer Dr. Alexander Brzezny declared a Pertussis (Whooping Cough) outbreak in Grant County. As of yesterday, Public Health staff have investigated 25 cases and 262 case contacts of Pertussis in Grant County residents since August 23, several of which are children of school and childcare age.

All precautions and recommendations issued by the Grant County Health District are still in effect. The minimum precautions and recommendations are:

- Children and school/childcare staff should be up to date on Pertussis immunizations.
- Unimmunized children and staff with a cough and runny nose should be considered for exclusion from school and childcare, and should be evaluated for Pertussis as appropriate.
- Contact the Grant County Health District when a case is reported to your school or childcare. Schools should complete the Pertussis Reporting form and fax to the GCHD at 509-764-2813. (see attached)

Due to the outbreak conditions, additional precautions and recommendations include:

- School and childcare staff exercise increased surveillance for Pertussis symptoms in their facilities, especially among un- and under-vaccinated individuals. Pertussis symptoms include:
 - Symptoms appear 6 to 21 (average 7-10) days after exposure to an infected person.
 - Starts with cold symptoms or simply a dry cough followed by episodes of severe coughing. Fever is absent or mild.
 - Gagging or vomiting may occur after severe coughing spells. Cough may be worse at night.
 - The person may look and feel healthy between coughing episodes.
 - Immunized school children, adolescents, and adults often have milder illness than young children.

- Infants with Pertussis may not develop a severe cough. They may only have a mild cough, decreased feeding, and may have difficulty breathing or turn a bluish color
- All children and staff with a cough and runny nose need to be monitored. If a cough lasts 7 or more days, exclude until approved for return by a medical care provider.
- All staff should get a Tdap vaccination if they have not had one yet, including those 65 and older (however vaccination does not guarantee immunity). No minimum interval since last Td needs to be followed.
- A new recommendation to the medical community for children 7-10 years old who are un- and under-vaccinated against Pertussis should receive one dose of Tdap (preferentially as the initial dose of their catch up series).

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