



# County of Santa Cruz

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## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UNIT

### PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

**TO:** Parents and School Personnel  
**FROM:** Dr. Lisa B. Hernandez, Health Officer, Santa Cruz County  
**DATE:** June 4, 2014  
**SUBJECT:** Pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak in Santa Cruz County

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#### SITUATION

Over 1,700 cases of pertussis have been reported to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) in the first four months of 2014. This represents more than a 3-fold increase compared to the same time period in 2013. In Santa Cruz County, 12 cases of pertussis have been confirmed in the first quarter of 2014 compared to one case in the first quarter of 2013. As of 5/30/14, we have had a total of 26 confirmed cases of pertussis. Statewide, teenagers appear to be the age group most affected by this illness.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The **symptoms** of pertussis vary by age. **For children**, a typical case of pertussis starts with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks. The cough then worsens and children may have rapid coughing spells that end with a whooping sound. Young **infants** may not have typical pertussis symptoms and may have no apparent cough. Parents may describe episodes in which the infant's face turns red or purple. For **adults**, pertussis may simply be a cough that persists for several weeks.
- **See your doctor immediately** if you suspect you or a family member may have pertussis. Pertussis can be treated with antibiotics.
- School officials may want to consider sending students, with the above-mentioned symptoms, home for evaluation by their doctor.
- Those individuals who have been exposed may be able to prevent the disease by taking the appropriate antibiotic. If you have been exposed, check with your doctor to determine if you would benefit from antibiotics.
- Infants too young to be fully immunized remain most vulnerable to severe and fatal cases of pertussis. Everyone in a household with infants should be vaccinated. Check with your doctor to get vaccinated.
- To prevent severe pertussis in infants, CDPH recommends that pregnant women receive a pertussis vaccine booster during the third trimester of each pregnancy, and that infants be vaccinated as soon as possible. The county health clinic at 1080 Emeline is open for immunizations on a walk-in basis from 1:30pm to 4pm, M-F. The county health clinic in Watsonville at 9 Crestview Dr. is open for immunizations on a walk-in basis from 1pm to 4pm, M-F. For more information on immunization clinic hours and cost, please visit: [www.santacruzhealth.org/phealth/cd/3clinics.htm](http://www.santacruzhealth.org/phealth/cd/3clinics.htm)

