



RISE IN PERTUSSIS CASES IN MICHIGAN

Information for Health Care Providers

A recent health alert notification from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) reports continued increased levels of pertussis (whooping cough) in 2009. An increase was seen in Michigan in the latter half of 2008.

Health care providers can help by assuring proper diagnosis, treatment, prevention and control. Clinicians should consider pertussis in prolonged cough illnesses (2 weeks or more). Recommended diagnostic tests are culture or PCR of nasopharyngeal (NP) aspirate or swab (Dacron swab). Serology and DFA tests are NOT recommended. All suspected pertussis cases should be reported to the local public health department..

Recommended treatment for pertussis is a course of a macrolide antibiotic (5 days azithromycin, or 7 days clarithromycin, or 14 days erythromycin; an alternative is 14 days Trimethoprim and Sulfamethoxazole). Household and other close contacts of cases should receive antibiotic prophylaxis within 3 weeks of exposure using same antibiotics in recommended doses.

Infants are at highest risk of severe disease and death; older siblings and adults often are the source. Infants and children should receive pertussis vaccine series (DTaP) as per the U.S. recommended childhood immunization schedule. Infants should receive four doses of pertussis vaccine by the time they are 18 months of age. This includes three primary doses and one booster. A second booster is recommended before the child starts kindergarten or once they become four years of age. Since immunity to pertussis can decrease with age an additional booster is recommended for 11-12 year olds. All doses should be given as close to the recommended ages as possible.

Tdap is the recommended choice for a booster for adolescents and adults as it boosts immunity against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. Children 11 to 12 years of age should receive Tdap as should adults who have not received Tdap at their pre-teen visit. The latter is especially important for adults who are health care workers or who care for infants.

If there are any questions related to pertussis or other reportable communicable diseases please contact the Disease Control Section of Wayne County Department of Public Health at 734-727-7078.