



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH

412 NE Ford Street – McMinnville, OR 97128 – Phone 503-434-7525 – Fax 503-472-9731 – TTY 1-800-735-2900

April 13, 2015

Dear Parents, Guardians and School staff:

Yamhill County is experiencing some cases of pertussis (whooping cough). The infection is caused by a bacteria and is most dangerous – and in some cases life-threatening - for infants less than one year of age. **The most effective way to prevent pertussis is for children, teens and adults to be fully up to date on pertussis vaccines.**

Because this illness is circulating in our community, Yamhill County Public Health and Yamhill County Schools would like everyone to be aware of the following recommendations to prevent further spread of pertussis infections in our communities:

- If you or your child has symptoms of pertussis - as described below - please stay home from school and consult with your health care provider right away.
- Check to make sure you and your child are up to date with current vaccine recommendations.
- Pregnant women with the illness can infect their newborns after they are born. It is recommended that women receive the adult pertussis booster known as the Tdap with every pregnancy.

Pertussis (whooping cough) Symptoms:

Symptoms of pertussis include cold-like symptoms followed in one to two weeks by a severe cough that can last for weeks to months. During coughing attacks, children may gag, gasp or strain to inhale, making the high-pitched whooping sound. This may be followed by vomiting or exhaustion. Fever is usually absent or minimal. Pertussis can be life-threatening in infants less than 12 months of age. It is still possible to get sick with pertussis if you have had all the necessary vaccines, but the risk of infection is much greater in those who are not up to date on their pertussis vaccines.

Prevention:

- Keep current with recommended vaccines.
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water.
- Stay at home when ill.
- Cover your cough and sneeze.

If you have further questions, please call 503-434-7525.

Sincerely,

William Koenig, D.O.
Public Health Officer
Yamhill County Public Health

Committed to supporting safety, wellness, and dignity for all