

County of Santa Clara

Public Health Department



Health Officer
976 Lenzen Avenue, 2nd Floor
San José, CA 95126

UPDATE: Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

DATE: June 30, 2010

TO: Internal Medicine
Pediatrics
Obstetrics/Gynecology
Infectious Disease
Hospital Emergency Departments

This fax contains 2 pages.

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ALL physicians at your location.

FROM: Martin Fenstersheib, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Since the last alert dated June 7, the number of pertussis cases reported in Santa Clara County has increased dramatically. In the first 6 months of 2009, 9 cases of pertussis were reported in Santa Clara County. By contrast, 41 cases have been reported to date in 2010, 19 in the last month alone. Of the cases reported this calendar year, 5 were less than 12 months, and 10 have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported.

California is on track to record more pertussis cases in 2010 than have been seen statewide in 50 years. This alert focuses on how to prevent pertussis through appropriate vaccination.

Transmission

Pertussis is transmitted by large respiratory droplets to close contacts. Persons with pertussis are most infectious during the first 3 - 4 weeks of infection: from onset of runny nose until 2 - 3 weeks of paroxysmal cough. Susceptible close contacts – those who have direct contact with respiratory, oral or nasal secretions from, or who share a confined space for ≥ 1 hr with an infectious person – are most at risk of infection.

Vaccination

Protection from the childhood DTaP series has usually waned by the time a person is 10 - 12 years old. In 2005, two pertussis-containing vaccines were licensed for use in adolescents and adults. Because adolescents and adults are the most common source of infection for infants, timely vaccination of adolescents and adults is critical to protecting infants from severe infection or even death from pertussis.

Board of Supervisors: Donald F. Gage, George Shirakawa, Dave Cortese, Ken Yeager, Liz Kniss
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

- Infants and Young Children
 - Acellular pertussis vaccine (aP) is administered in combination with tetanus and diphtheria (DTaP).
 - Infants and children should receive a dose at 2, 4, 6, and 15 - 18 months, in addition to a booster prior to grade school entry at age 4 or 5.
- Adolescents
 - Two pertussis-containing vaccines (BOOSTRIX® is licensed for ages 10-64 and ADACEL® is licensed for ages 11 - 64) are available for adolescents. Both vaccines contain tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis components (Tdap).
 - Adolescents aged 11 - 18 years should receive a single dose of Tdap vaccine instead of Td (tetanus and diphtheria alone).
- Adults
 - One pertussis containing vaccine (ADACEL®, licensed for ages 11 - 64) is available for adults.
 - Adults aged 19 - 64 should receive a dose of Tdap instead of their next tetanus (Td) booster.
 - Adults who have or anticipate having close contact with an infant less than a year old (e.g. parents or other adults in the home, child care providers, health care providers) should receive a single dose of Tdap, ideally at least 2 weeks before contact with an infant. An interval of 2 years or more since the last tetanus booster is recommended; shorter intervals have not been well studied.
 - If they have not previously received Tdap, women should receive a dose of Tdap right after giving birth.

Additional Information

Uninsured household contacts to infants may be referred to the Public Health Immunization Clinic. For more information see: www.sccphd.org

For further questions, please contact the Disease Prevention and Control Program at 408-885-4214 during regular business hours. After hours and on weekends, healthcare providers may call County Communications at 408-998-3438 and ask to speak with the public health officer on call.

Resources

Santa Clara County Public Health Department: www.sccphd.org

California Department of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm>

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for use of Tdap in adolescents and adults:

CDC. Preventing Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Among Adolescents: Use of Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Acellular Pertussis Vaccines. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2006; 55 (No. RR-3); 1-34.

CDC. Preventing Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Among Adults: Use of Tetanus Toxoid, reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Acellular Pertussis Vaccines. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2006; 55 (No. RR-17): 1 – 37.

CDC. Prevention of Pertussis, Tetanus, and Diphtheria Among Pregnant and Postpartum Women and Their Infants. Recommendations of The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 2008; 57 (No. RR-4): 1 – 51.