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## **PERTUSSIS**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

An increase in Whooping Cough (Pertussis) is being seen in Riverside County and other jurisdictions in California. Parents are encouraged to protect themselves and their children by getting vaccinated.

#### **What is Whooping Cough (Pertussis)?**

- Whooping Cough is an infectious disease caused by bacteria.
- It is easily spread from person to person through close contact.
- It is a very serious illness in infants.

#### **What are the symptoms of Whooping Cough?**

- Infants: signs of a cold; runny nose; poor feeding – may not have cough or fever. After a few days may develop respiratory distress (trouble breathing)
- Adolescents & Adults: symptoms start with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, and then followed by severe coughing for weeks to months.

#### **How can the public protect themselves?**

- Make sure children are up-to-date on their Immunizations
- Obtain a Tetanus booster (Tdap) especially close contacts of unvaccinated infants; pregnant and post-partum women.
- Cover cough and wash hands frequently.

#### **When should vaccine be given?**

- Routine schedule: 2 – 4 – 6 Months, 12 – 15 Months, 4 – 6 years of age
- Accelerated schedule: 1<sup>st</sup> dose at 6 weeks, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> dose at 4 week intervals.
- The protection of the vaccine decreases by the time children finish middle school, so adolescents and adults need booster shots for whooping cough

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**Where can the public obtain Tdap?**

- The public should contact their health provider to discuss vaccinations
- Vaccinations are also available through the Riverside County Public Health Clinics. Call 1-800-720-9553, for clinic locations.

**How many cases have been reported in Riverside County?**

- Between January 2010 through June 24, 2010, 35 cases have been reported in Riverside County – compared to 17 cases for the same time period in 2009.

**What is the geographic and age distribution of cases? See sit stat report**

**When was the previous increase in Pertussis in Riverside County?**

- Sixty Four cases were reported in 2005 compared to 25 in 2004.

**Have there been any deaths in Riverside County?**

- No deaths reported at this time.

**What is Riverside County DOPH doing to address the problem?**

- Promoting and offering vaccinations.
- Providing recommendations to the medical community.
- Testing, treatment and vaccinations.
- Investigation of cases
- Conducting enhanced surveillance

**Where can the public obtain additional information?**

- <http://www.rivcoph.org>