



Is there a way to prevent the spread of Pertussis?

There is a series of three injections of vaccines at two, four and six months of age followed by another injection between twelve and eighteen months of age. A booster injection is then given at four to six years of age. For maximum protection, children must receive all 5 doses of the vaccine.

In 2005, a vaccine was approved for adolescents and adults. A single dose of this vaccine is recommended for persons who have completed the recommended childhood vaccination series.

There are now two such vaccines approved for use: Boostrix is approved for persons 10–18 years of age; Adacel is approved for persons 11–64 years of age.

Are there other ways to prevent Pertussis?

Other methods of preventing the spread of Pertussis include:

- Washing hands with soap and warm water.
- Teaching children to cover mouth and nose if coughing or sneezing and to wash hands after doing so.
- Not sharing eating utensils and drinking glasses.
- Minimizing the amount of contact you have with someone you know is infected or if you are infected, minimizing the amount of time you are around others.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH)

Local Resources

For information on Pertussis visit our website at:

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/community-health/epidemiology/>

or write:

Tulsa Health Department
Planning & Epidemiology
5051 S. 129th E. Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74134

Other Contact Information:

Phone: 918/595-4505

Fax: 918/595-4588

E-mail: epidemiology@tulsa-health.org

For more information on Pertussis, visit:

- Oklahoma State Department of Health
(405) 271-4060
www.health.state.ok.us/program/cdd/infec.html
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(888) 443-7232
<http://www.cdc.gov/doc.do/id/0900f3ec80228696>

Contact the THD Immunizations Department at 918-582-9355 for information on how you can get vaccinated.



**TULSA HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Prepared by Planning & Epidemiology



Pertussis Whooping Cough

From the late 1940's to the late 1970's, Pertussis declined steadily in the United States due to vaccination of infants and children. Since the early 1980's the incidence of Pertussis has increased, peaking about every 3 to 4 years. This may be due, in part, to greater awareness of the disease. In Tulsa County, the number of reported cases fluctuates, with the most recent peak at 43 cases in 2001.

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Pertussis

What is Pertussis?

Pertussis, also known as Whooping Cough, is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by the bacteria *Bordetella Pertussis*. The term whooping cough was given to this infection because it causes both children and adults to have severe coughing spells. During these spells, some people make a whooping sound as they are trying to breathe. Others may not experience the whooping sound.

Who is at risk?

Pertussis can occur at any age; however, children under the age of 5 years are at the highest risk of developing more serious symptoms. Being in close contact with an infected person for extended periods of time increases the risk of becoming infected.

How is Pertussis spread?

Transmission occurs through direct contact with discharges from the nose and mouth of an infected person.

What are the symptoms?

Stage 1 (Catarrhal):

- Cold, runny nose and irritating cough
Most infectious stage

Stage 2 (Paroxysmal):

- Severe series of coughs usually ending with a high-pitched whoop
- The whoop starts 1 to 2 weeks after the cold symptoms and lasts 1 to 2 months
- Thick, clear, sticky mucous may be coughed up at the end of the coughing spasm
- Coughing spasms are more frequent at night

Stage 3 (Convalescent):

- Gradual disappearance of symptoms occurring over 2 to 4 weeks, however, coughing spells can last for weeks or months
- Cough may become louder and may sound like it is getting worse as the person is getting better
- Coughing may flare up again later in a cold or upper respiratory illness. This does not mean that the person has been re-infected with pertussis

To hear the sound of a child with whooping cough visit our website at

<http://www.tulsa-health.org/community-health/epidemiology/?lid=731>

or [click here](#).



When do symptoms of Pertussis appear?

Symptoms, if present, may appear on an average from 9 to 10 days but could range from 6 to 20 days after exposure.

How is Pertussis diagnosed?

Pertussis may be suspected after 2 weeks of continuous cough with no known cause. Nose and throat cultures may be tested for the presence of the bacteria. Other laboratory tests may be used for confirmation.

How long is an infected person able to spread Pertussis?

Without treatment, an infected person can spread the disease from the time he or she starts coughing up to three weeks after the start of cough. After five days of treatment with an appropriate antibiotic, an infected person no longer spreads the disease.

Can a person get Pertussis again?

Usually once a person has had pertussis, he or she would be protected against another bout of the infection. However, sometimes a person may get pertussis a second time, especially if many years have passed.