

Whooping Cough Disease Alert

Important Notice to Parents

April 8, 2019

At least one child who attends **Knapp** has been diagnosed with whooping cough, also known as pertussis. Whooping cough is contagious illness that is preventable with a shot (vaccine) called the DTaP, (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis).

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Whooping cough begins with cold-like symptoms, mild cough, and low-grade or no fever
- Cough becomes more severe, causing coughing spells or fits
- Coughing spells may be followed by vomiting, difficulty catching breath, face turning blue, and/or high-pitched whoop
- Sometimes people appear fine between coughing spells

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

- Whooping cough spread when an infected person sneezes or coughs and another individual breathes in the bacteria
- After exposure to whooping cough, it takes 4-21 days (usually 7-10 days) for a person to get sick

HOW LONG CAN A PERSON PASS THE INFECTION TO OTHERS?

- A person is most contagious in the early stages of the disease
- A person stops being contagious after five days of appropriate antibiotics, or after 21 days of coughing.

TREATMENT & CONTROL OF SPREAD

- Contact your healthcare provider if your child has a cough and have your child examined.
- Tell your healthcare provider about a possible exposure to whooping cough.
- There is a test for whooping cough, ask your provider for the test (PCR by nasal swab or nasal wash).
- If your child has whooping cough, your healthcare provider may prescribe antibiotics.
- Anyone diagnosed with whooping cough must remain home until completing five days of an appropriate antibiotic or until no longer contagious, 21 days after onset of coughing.
- A person may still cough after taking antibiotics for 5 days, but they are not contagious.
- Check your child's shot record. Make sure your child is up to date on the whooping cough shot (DTaP).
- Family members should ask their healthcare provider about receiving antibiotics to prevent them from getting sick too (post-exposure prophylactic antibiotics.)

If you have any questions please contact **Denver Public Health Epi-Line (303) 602-3614** Monday through Friday, between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.