
Pertussis Advisory

April 29, 2014

Situation Update

Over the past 3 months Riverside County has been experiencing an increase in pertussis cases. Forty-five cases were reported between January 1, 2014 and April 23, 2014 compared to 6 cases during this same time period in 2013. Pertussis is cyclical. Cases tend to peak every two to five years. A significant increase in Riverside County occurred in 2010 during a State wide epidemic when 461 cases were reported and again in 2011 with 135 cases reported. The County of Riverside Department of Public Health is urging school nurses to be alert for potential cases of pertussis.

Pertussis is a respiratory disease that is highly contagious and is transmitted through respiratory droplets.

Symptoms include:

- Cold-like symptoms (coryza, sneezing, occasional cough-which gradually becomes worse over time) fever is minimal or absent.
- Spasms of severe coughing, followed by a sudden deep inspiration which may be followed in a characteristic “whooping” sound. Post-tussive vomiting is common in all ages. **Illness may be milder in vaccinated people.**
- Classic pertussis is 6-10 weeks in duration, but the cough may last longer in some people.

Period of Communicability:

- Persons 1 year of age or greater are considered infectious from the onset of cold-like symptoms until after 5 days of treatment or until 21 days after onset of cough if no (or partial) treatment is given. Infants less than 1 year are considered infectious for 6 weeks without treatment.

Children presenting with the symptoms listed above should be evaluated by their health care provider. Two or more children in a classroom diagnosed with pertussis may be considered an outbreak and are reportable to Disease Control.

To report suspect or confirmed cases contact Disease Control at (951) 358-5107.