



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY ■ DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ■
DISEASE CONTROL BRANCH

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PERTUSSIS ACTIVITY HAS INCREASED IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY FOR 2005

Nationwide pertussis activity has increased. California has seen a dramatic increase in numbers. From January to November of 2005, 1,376 cases of disease were reported, with four infant deaths through August. The number of illnesses and deaths due to pertussis through November of 2005 has already surpassed the totals for all of 2004.

Provisional data for 2005 indicate 58 Pertussis cases were reported in Riverside County. This is a significant increase compared to the 20 cases reported in 2004. A review of cases by age indicates that the highest number of cases occurred in children less than 1 year of age, followed by children in the 5-19 year of age group.

The geographic distribution of pertussis cases reflects the highest number of cases (27) in the western part of the county. In the mid county area there were 19 cases and, 12 cases were reported in the eastern area of the county.

It is recommended that all suspected pertussis cases have laboratory specimens collected prior to the initiation of antimicrobial treatment. The preferred method of collection is nasopharyngeal aspirate or swab obtained for culture from the posterior nasopharynx. Please contact the Public Health laboratory at (951) 358-5070 for questions on specimen collection.

Chemoprophylaxis is recommended for all close contacts of confirmed as well as suspected pertussis cases regardless of age or vaccination status. The recommended drug for both treatment and chemoprophylaxis is erythromycin with alternative drugs being clarithromycin, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole, and azithromycin. For further information you can refer to our website at <http://www.rivco-diseasecontrol.org>.

It is important for clinicians to be alert for patients presenting with signs and symptoms of pertussis. Please continue to report confirmed and suspect pertussis cases to Disease Control by fax at (951) 358-5102 or telephone (951) 358-5107. Reporting by clinicians, hospitals and laboratories have greatly enhanced surveillance efforts by Public Health as we monitor the course of the disease.