



Public Health
Solutions

District Health Department

Prevent Promote Protect Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline and Thayer Counties

February 25, 2015

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Cases are on the rise in southeastern Nebraska
Guidance for Parents

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease marked by severe coughing. While It can affect people of all ages, it is most serious in infants and young children and can be life-threatening especially for babies under a year old. Older children, teenagers and adults who may not know they have the disease can spread it to infants and young children.

We need your help in preventing the possible spread of the disease. The 5 things that we need you to do are:

1. Be sure your child's shots are current. Children are vaccinated against Pertussis as part of a 5-shot series. Children usually receive doses at 2, 4 and 6 months old, a fourth dose is given when a child is 15-18 months old and then the fifth dose is received prior to entering school. Nebraska law also requires proof of a Pertussis booster shot before entering 7th grade.
2. Get a Pertussis booster if you and other family members have not had one in the past 4 years.
3. Watch for the symptoms of Pertussis and go to the doctor if you see them. The early symptoms are similar to those for a cold and later a bad cough develops. The early symptoms are a runny nose, sinus congestion and irritated cough. Later a harsh cough develops.
4. Make sure those around you cover their coughs and wash their hands. It is spread easily by droplet sprays from coughs.
5. Pertussis is highly contagious; if your child or someone in your family shows early symptoms, please keep him/her home from school, church, other homes, and public places until your doctor says it is ok.

If Pertussis vaccine is not available through your local health care provider, please contact the Public Health Solutions District Health Department (PHS) at 402-826-3880. You may also contact Public Health Solutions for additional questions or concerns regarding Pertussis and how to protect your family.