



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

For more information, please call: (989) 773-5921 ext. 8434
2012 E. Preston Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858, www.cmdhd.org

To: Isabella County Daycare Facilities

From: Robert Graham, DO, MPH, FAAFP
Medical Director, Central Michigan District Health Department

Date: March 21, 2014

Regarding: Local Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Activity

Central Michigan District Health Department has noted an increase in Whooping Cough in the area since early March 7th. As of this morning, there have been 21 confirmed, probable, and suspect cases of Whooping Cough identified in the Mt. Pleasant area. Area medical providers have been notified of the increase in the disease and our local health department nursing staff are actively working to identify additional cases.

Whooping cough is an infection of the upper and lower respiratory tract. Respiratory droplets transmit the germ that causes whooping cough. The symptoms of whooping cough start with cold symptoms that last 7–10 days. The cold symptoms then turn into a cough with the characteristic whoop. Whooping cough is very distinctive because a person will have a high pitched inspiration of air followed by intense fits of coughing. The cough can persist for up to six weeks.

A person with whooping cough is most contagious during the first three weeks of the illness. If treated early, the duration of the runny nose and cough can be shortened. Treatment consists of a course of antibiotics. Usually, a person with whooping cough will stop shedding the whooping cough germ within five days of starting treatment.

Whooping cough has been contained in the United States for many years through the use of childhood immunizations. The majority of children receive a vaccine with their childhood immunizations which protects them from whooping cough. However, immunity has been shown to diminish over time and we are seeing an increase in the number of cases. The good news is that there are two vaccines that adolescents and adults can receive to boost their immunity to whooping cough. Your local health department has the new vaccine available.

Parents and children can help prevent the spread of whooping cough by:

- Staying home if you have a cough and cold symptoms
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze
- Wash your hands frequently especially before you eat or before you prepare food

- If you have a temperature over 100 degrees stay home and if the fever lasts more than 24 hours, then see your family doctor
- Call your doctor or the health department for an appointment to get the whooping cough booster vaccine
- If your child is ill go to the doctor, ask your doctor to test your child for whooping cough by doing a naso-pharyngeal swab for pertussis PCR
- If your child is ill with whooping cough have him/her stay home from group activities until your child has taken antibiotics for five days.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day and get 8 hours of sleep at night

Vaccination against Whooping Cough remains our best defense against this disease.

Appointments for vaccination against whooping cough may be made by calling your Medical Provider or Central Michigan District Health Department at 773-5921 ext. 8405. For additional information you may call our Communicable Disease Nursing Supervisor, Mari Pat Terpening, RN, BSN, at 989-773-5921 ext. 8434.

CMDHD is actively investigating this situation and will keep you informed if there are any changes that may affect your facility.