



"creating healthy communities"

UTAH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Dear Parents:

A person attending one of the classes your child attends was recently diagnosed with pertussis. Pertussis (whooping cough) is a contagious disease characterized by cold symptoms such as runny nose and an irritating cough. This infection can be life-threatening in small children. However, in previously immunized children, teenagers and adults it frequently presents as a very persistent and sometimes severe cough that lasts for weeks. This can be spread to others, including unimmunized infants.

The following steps have been recommended for preventing further cases of pertussis in the classroom:

Immunization

For classroom contacts less than 7 years of age:

- A fourth dose of DTaP, if the third dose was given more than 6 months ago; or
- A fifth dose of DTaP, if the fourth dose was given more than 3 years ago.

For classroom contacts 7-10 years of age:

- Currently, there is no vaccine licensed for use in children ages 7-10.

For classroom contacts 11 years of age and older:

- A booster of Tdap is recommended, unless the person has had a tetanus shot within the past 2 years.

For classroom contacts who are unimmunized or inadequately immunized:

- The school nurse will send a separate note home with additional instructions to those in this category.

Preventive antibiotics

We do not recommend that classroom contacts receive preventive antibiotics unless they are in a high-risk category. A high risk person is someone who is, or is in close contact with someone who is:

- An infant under the age of 1 year;
- Pregnant;
- Inadequately immunized under the age of 7 years;
- Individual with chronic or immunocompromised conditions.

If this is the case, please contact your health clinician about having your child receive a recommended antibiotic for pertussis prevention. In addition, if your child has symptoms that could be pertussis, regardless if he/she is in a high risk category or not, please take him/her to your health clinician soon to receive testing.

By notifying you of this possible exposure, we are trying to control the spread and prevent new cases of this illness. If you have any questions about signs or symptoms of this illness, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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