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## News Release

John R. Kasich / Governor  
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### **Pertussis Booster Shots Encouraged Following Increase in Cases across Ohio**

*Whooping Cough can lead to months of illness in adults and be deadly for infants*

COLUMBUS - The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is encouraging Ohioans to get up to date on their pertussis vaccinations following outbreaks in several communities across the state. ODH monitors outbreaks of pertussis in Ohio and provides vaccines to local health departments when immunization clinics are needed to help control an outbreak.

Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is highly contagious and is one of the most commonly occurring vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States. People with pertussis usually spread the disease by coughing or sneezing while in close contact with others, who then breathe in the pertussis bacteria.

Pertussis is most severe for babies, who often catch the illness from a family member or other caregiver. More than half of infants less than 1 year of age who get the disease must be hospitalized. In rare cases (one in 100), pertussis can be deadly, especially in infants less than 1 year of age.

“If your family is going to be welcoming a new baby or if you are a caregiver to young children, it is especially important to get a pertussis booster shot,” said Dr. Ted Wymyslo, Director of the Ohio Department of Health. “Not only will it lessen your illness if you get whooping cough, but it can help protect infants who haven’t had a chance to get the full series of vaccinations yet.”

There are pertussis vaccines for infants, children, preteens, teens and adults. The childhood vaccine is called DTaP, and the pertussis booster vaccine for adolescents and adults is called Tdap. Both provide protection against tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis.

<b><i>Who Should be Vaccinated</i></b>	<b><i>When</i></b>
Children	The series of immunization starts at 2 months and continues at 4, 6, 12 months with a final dose before kindergarten. These shots are called DTaP.
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Adolescents	Starting last year, the State Of Ohio requires 7 <sup>th</sup> graders to get a Tdap booster.
Pregnant Women	Once during each pregnancy.
Adults	Once as an adult. The vaccine is called “Tdap” and also contains a tetanus shot. Especially if you are around infants.

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During the past 12 months ODH distributed a total of 462,015 doses of pertussis-containing vaccine as part of routine childhood immunizations.

Increases in the number of people infected with pertussis tend to occur every three to five years. In 2010, several states, including Ohio, reported increased cases of pertussis. So far in 2013, Ohio has seen a 20 percent increase in reported pertussis cases as compared to 2012. As of Nov. 2, there have been 901 cases reported in 2013, compared with 742 on the same date in 2012.

**Annual Pertussis Cases in Ohio**

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cases	837	628	1100	1858	690	905

Pertussis symptoms can be different depending on your age and vaccination history. Pertussis usually starts with cold-like symptoms, and maybe a mild cough, but not every runny nose is pertussis. Pertussis is often not suspected or diagnosed until a persistent cough with spasms sets in after one to two weeks.

In infants, the cough may be mild or absent. However, infants may have a symptom known as “apnea.” Apnea is a pause in the child’s breathing pattern. Infants and children with pertussis can cough violently and rapidly, over and over, until the air is gone from their lungs and they're forced to inhale with a loud "whooping" sound. This extreme coughing can result in vomiting and exhaustion. Illness is generally less severe in adolescents and adults. The coughing fits can last for 10 weeks or more.

Seeking treatment when pertussis symptoms first start is important. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers this advice for treatment:

- If you or your child is having trouble breathing, seek medical attention immediately.
- Tell the doctor if you or your child has been around others with cough/cold symptoms or if you’ve heard that pertussis is in your community.
- Antibiotic treatment may make the pertussis infection less severe if it is started early, before coughing fits begin.
- Antibiotic treatment can help prevent spreading the disease to close contacts (people who have spent a lot of time around the infected person) and is necessary for stopping the spread of pertussis.
- Most people with pertussis no longer spread the disease after taking antibiotics for five days. If antibiotics are not taken, infected persons can spread the disease for at least 21 days.

Visit [www.ODH.Ohio.gov](http://www.ODH.Ohio.gov) or [www.cdc.gov/pertussis](http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis) for more information.

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