



Broome County

Health Department

225 Front Street / Binghamton, New York 13905 / (607) 778-3930 / Fax (607) 778-2838

DEBRA A. PRESTON
Broome County Executive

CLAUDIA EDWARDS, MS
Public Health Director

January 11, 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian,

There have been confirmed cases of Pertussis in Windsor Central School District. **The Broome County Health Department communicable disease nurse has already contacted individuals who are more likely to be exposed to advise preventive treatment with an antibiotic. No preventive antibiotics are recommended for any other persons at this time. Instead parents should watch their child for symptoms, and contact his/her health care provider if a persistent or severe cough develops. If your provider suspects pertussis, your child should stay home until 5 days of an appropriate antibiotic are completed.**

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that is spread through the air by cough. Pertussis begins with cold symptoms and a cough, which becomes much worse over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms usually include a long series of coughs ("coughing fits") which may be followed by a whooping noise, vomiting, turning blue, or difficulty catching breath. There is generally only a slight fever. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help alleviate the cough.

In order to reduce your child's risk of pertussis, give them the following instructions:

Do not to share anything (such as food or beverages, water bottles, eating utensils, chapstick) that has been in or around your mouth with anyone.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or use your sleeve when sneezing or coughing. Throw away the used tissue and wash your hands.

Please consider the following New York State Department of Health recommendations:

1. Infants under one year old, especially those under six months, are most likely to have severe symptoms if they develop pertussis. When possible, young infants should be kept away from people with a cough. **Infants with any coughing illness should be seen promptly by their doctor.**
2. Pertussis vaccine, called DTaP, is available for routine use for children under seven. Pertussis vaccine, Tdap, is available for adolescents and adults aged 11-64 years to be used as a single booster dose. Under vaccinated children aged 7-10 may also be vaccinated with Tdap. Consult your physician if you have any questions about these vaccines or your child's immunization status.
3. If your child comes down with cold symptoms that include a severe cough, talk to your child's doctor without delay. Tell the doctor that pertussis has been seen in your child's school.

If you have further concerns or questions you may contact your doctor or the Broome County Health Department communicable disease staff at 778-2839.

Sincerely,

Marianne Yourdon, PHN
Donna Cutting, PHN
Communicable Disease Nurses
Broome County Health Department