



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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PERTUSSIS VACCINE AVAILABLE AT COUNTY HEALTH CENTERS *Tdap Booster Shot is for Residents with No Medical Insurance*

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency continues to offer the whooping cough vaccine for residents with no medical insurance.

The pertussis booster shot, or Tdap, is available at low cost at the County's six public health centers and one vaccination clinic. To find the nearest location, people should call 2-1-1.

People with medical insurance can get the vaccine from their primary care physician or local retail pharmacy. Starting July 1, parents of students in 7th through 12th grade will have to show proof their children have received the booster shot in order to attend school. It is estimated that about half of the 226,000 local students impacted by this new law have not received the booster shot.

"We're providing the vaccine to make it easier for parents to meet this new requirement," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "The booster shot can protect them against the ongoing whooping cough epidemic."

To date, there have been 226 confirmed whooping cough cases in the region, including three new cases this past week where others may have been exposed to the disease. Last year, pertussis reached a record 1,144 cases for the county, including two infant deaths. List of new cases is on page two.

The California Department of Public Health recommends a pertussis booster vaccine (Tdap) for everyone 10 years or older who has not yet received it, especially women of childbearing age, before, during, or immediately after pregnancy; and other people, including household contacts, caregivers, and healthcare workers, who have contact with pregnant women or infants. Children 7 to 9 years of age who did not receive all of their routine childhood shots are recommended to receive a Tdap booster dose.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that children get one dose of DTaP vaccine at the following ages: 2 months; 4 months; 6 months; 15 to 18 months and 4 to 6 years. Children should receive a Tdap booster shot at 11 or 12 years of age. Beginning July 1, all students in 7th through 12th grade, in public and private schools, must show proof that they had the pertussis booster shot before they return to school.

A typical case of pertussis starts with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever, if present, is usually mild. The disease is treatable with antibiotics. For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHS Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.

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This week's new pertussis cases where there was a potential for public exposure are:

- A 15 year-old who is up to date with immunizations and attends Mission Hills High School in the San Marcos Unified School District. Contact: Ric White (760) 752-1221
- A 9 year-old who is up to date with immunizations and attends Adobe Bluffs Elementary School in the Poway Unified School District. Contact: Sharon Raffer (858) 521-2800 ext. 2707
- A 17 year-old who was not up-to-date with immunizations and attends Scripps Ranch High School in the San Diego Unified School District. Contact: Linda Zintz (619) 725-5568.