



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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PERTUSSIS CASES REACH 326 IN COUNTY

Vaccine Available at Doctor's Offices, Retail Pharmacies and County Public Health Centers

The number of pertussis cases in the region reached 326 this week, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) reported today.

The new total includes a 4-year-old child who is up to date with immunizations and attends Garfield Child Development Center in the San Diego Unified School District.

"Pertussis continues to sicken children in schools and other settings," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Parents need to make sure their children have the recommended doses of the whooping cough vaccine to avoid getting infected and making others sick."

Additionally, a new state law requires 7th through 12th graders to show proof they have received the Tdap booster shot before they can enroll in school. AB 354 was passed as a result of the pertussis epidemic across the state, which established new records of whooping cough cases last year. In San Diego County 1,144 cases were reported, including two infant deaths.

Parents can get the Tdap booster shot for their children through their primary care physician, but students who are not covered under a medical insurance plan can obtain the shot from a local retail pharmacy for a fee, or from a County public health center or booster clinic.

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 should receive a Tdap booster dose.

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 and ongoing vaccination clinics, call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit www.sdiz.org.

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