



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION  
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## **WHOOPING COUGH CASES UP IN REGION** *Three New Cases Reported at Local Schools*

Three new cases of pertussis, commonly called whooping cough, were reported in local schools this past week, according to the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency. These cases demonstrate that the disease is still active in the San Diego region and has potential to expose others.

To date, the pertussis case total increased to 195 for San Diego County. In 2010, there were a record 1,144 pertussis cases in the county, including two infant deaths. See second page for specific school information.

“The best thing parents can do to protect their children and the community from pertussis is to be vigilant with immunization updates,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “Due to a record number of cases last year, legislators enacted a new law, effective July 1, that requires middle and high school students to show proof of a Tdap booster shot before they will be allowed to register for classes.”

Residents can get vaccinated at their primary care doctor or at an HHSA Public Health Center if they don't have a regular healthcare provider.

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 7-9 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 11-12 years of age. Beginning July 1, all students in 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> 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 HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org).

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

- A 13-year-old who was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Bernardo Heights Middle School in the Poway Unified School District. Contact: Sharon Raffer (858) 521-2800.
- A 3-year-old who was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Montezuma Child Development Center in the San Diego Unified School District. Contact: Linda Zintz (619) 725-5568.
- A 14-year-old who was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Earl Warren Middle School in the San Dieguito Union High School District. Contact: Bruce Cochran (760) 753-6491.

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