



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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FOUR COUNTY CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is reporting the following individuals have been diagnosed with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough:

- A 10-year-old who attends Flora Vista Elementary in the Encinitas School District;
- A 10-year-old who attends Hope Elementary School in the Carlsbad Unified School District;
- A 10-year-old who attends the Rhoades School in Encinitas; and
- An 11-year-old who attends San Elijo Elementary School in the San Marcos Unified School District.

All four students were immunized with 5 DTaP vaccinations, but had not yet received a booster shot. It is recommended that children get five doses of DTaP vaccine, one dose at 2 mo., 4 mo., 6 mo., 15-18 mo., and 4-6 years of age. It is also recommended that people 11- 64 years of age receive a one-time dose of Tdap, given in place of a "tetanus booster," which is administered every 10 years.

"Immunity tends to lessen over time with many vaccines and because of that, children between the ages of 6 and 11 may be at risk for whooping cough," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Children should have the necessary vaccinations to protect themselves and others. This is a good reminder to parents to bring their children in for the important booster shot at age 11."

HHSA is working closely with the schools to notify staff and parents of all students who were potentially exposed.

Named for the "whoop" sound children and adults sometimes make when they try to breathe in during or after a severe coughing spell, whooping cough usually starts with flu-like symptoms, such as runny nose, sneezing, fever and a mild cough. These symptoms may be mild and brief, or last up to two weeks, but are often followed by severe coughing fits that may be associated with vomiting. Fever, if present, is usually mild. It is treatable with antibiotics.

Whooping cough can occur at any age, but infants and young children are at highest risk of life-threatening complications, the most common of which is pneumonia. In adolescents and adults, rib fractures and difficulty sleeping may occur.

There have been 56 reported cases of whooping cough in San Diego County this year. There were 143 cases in 2009.

For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch toll-free at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.