



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION**

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## THREE CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is reporting that three children have been diagnosed with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough:

- a 9-year-old who attends Calavera Hills Elementary School in the Carlsbad Unified School District;
- a 10-year-old who attends Sundance Elementary School in the Poway School District; and
- a 13-year-old who attends Potter Junior High School in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District.

The 9- and 10-year-old students were immunized with 5 DTaP vaccinations. The 13-year-old was fully immunized including 5 DTaP vaccinations and the Tdap booster shot. It's important to remember that no vaccine is 100 percent effective and immunity can wane over time, which makes it all the more important for everyone eligible to receive age-appropriate vaccinations.

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.

HHS 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 61 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 HHS Immunization Branch toll-free at (866) 358-2966, or visit the web site at [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org). ###