



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

August 4, 2010

CONTACT: Tom Christensen (619) 515-6535

## **PARENTS OF INFANTS URGED TO GET VACCINATED FOR PERTUSSIS** *Infants Not Adequately Protected Until Third Shot at 6 Months*

Young infants are especially susceptible to pertussis, commonly called whooping cough, and the best way to protect them according to officials from the County Health and Human Services Agency is to make sure family members and caregivers are up-to-date on their immunizations.

“Last week’s death of a 1-month-old infant is a strong and tragic reminder that we need to remain vigilant about pertussis,” said Dean Sidelinger, M.D., M.S.Ed., Deputy County Public Health Officer. “Even infants that may have started their series of whooping cough shots are not adequately protected until they have had their third shot at 6 months of age. Family members with young infants at home and caregivers must get vaccinated not only to protect themselves, but to protect infants that are most vulnerable to the disease.”

Immunity from pertussis, even if you are vaccinated, can lessen over time and no vaccine is 100 percent effective. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends 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 and a single dose of Tdap vaccine at 10-11 yrs.

In addition to the typical series of childhood pertussis immunizations, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends an adolescent-adult 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 health care 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.

San Diego County has had 298 cases of pertussis reported in 2010. As of July 27, the number of cases in California had climbed to 2,174, a six-fold increase from the same period last year. California is on pace to have the most cases of pertussis reported in more than half a century, according to the CDPH.

A typical case of pertussis in children and adults 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. To hear some examples of coughing that occurs with pertussis, visit: [http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/programs/phs/immunization\\_branch/pertussis\\_audio.html](http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/programs/phs/immunization_branch/pertussis_audio.html).

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](http://www.sdiz.org).

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This week's new cases are:

- A 10-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attended the summer program at Summerbridge San Diego. The program ended on July 30. Contact is Conrado Castro (619) 871-3517.
- A 9-year-old who was up-to-date on immunizations and attends the summer program at Turtleback Elementary School Extended Student Services in the Poway Unified School District. Contact Sharon Raffer (858) 521-2700.
- An 11-year-old who was due for a booster shot and attends Casillas Elementary School in the Chula Vista Elementary School District. Contact Anthony Millican (619) 425-9600 ext. 1328.
- A 13-year-old who was due for a booster shot and attends programs at the Boys and Girls Club branch in Clairemont. Contact is Michelle Malkin (858) 273-1645.