



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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WHOOPING COUGH CASES BEGIN DOWNWARD TREND IN REGION *County Public Health Tdap Clinic Available to Public*

San Diego County public health officials are encouraged by a decline in new pertussis cases in San Diego County for the third straight week, according to the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA).

“After persistent outreach efforts to vaccinate the public for whooping cough, the region is beginning to see a downward trend in the number of cases for the region compared to this same time last year. Previously, we saw dozens of cases from week to week, but we are beginning to see single-digit numbers in recent weeks,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer.

Also for the third straight week, there were no new cases at schools or other group sites that could have potentially exposed large numbers of people. So far this year 353 cases of pertussis have been reported. In 2010, a record 1,144 cases were reported in San Diego County, including two infant deaths.

A new state law requires 7th through 12th graders to show proof they have received the Tdap booster shot before they can attend classes. AB 354 was passed as a result of the pertussis epidemic across the state seen last year. “As the school year begins, we once again want to remind parents to make sure their children receive all their regularly scheduled pertussis shots,” said Wooten.

HHSA is holding a whooping cough booster clinic to help students meet the new state law. The clinic will take place on Sept. 12 from 3 to 7 p.m. at HHSA Rosecrans, 3851 Rosecrans St., San Diego (500 doses available).

Parents can also get the Tdap booster shot for their children through their primary care physician, and 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 Tdap-booster clinics.

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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