



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

June 23, 2010

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TWO CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

Two more local children have been diagnosed with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, according to the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. That brings the total of reportable cases in 2010 to 98. Last year, there were 143 cases in the county.

The cases are:

- A 3-year-old who was unimmunized and attends A Children's Garden Preschool in Encinitas; and
- A 12-year-old who had three DTaP vaccinations, but was not up-to-date on age appropriate vaccinations and attends Hillsdale Middle School in the Cajon Valley School District.

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

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. No vaccine is 100 percent effective and immunity can wane over time, but being up-to-date on your vaccinations can lessen the severity of illness-related symptoms.

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.

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.

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