



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 14, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

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CELEBRATE A HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON *Immunizations Are the Best Defense Against Pertussis*

Two more students at San Diego County schools were diagnosed with whooping cough bringing the total number of cases to 414 for the region to date, County Health and Human Services Agency officials said today.

In 2010, a record 1,144 cases were reported in San Diego County, including two infant deaths. See second page for details about the new cases.

“This holiday season will bring families and friends together. The best gift we can wish for is our health,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “Whooping cough, also known as pertussis, is a vaccine-preventable disease. Parents can ensure their children and pre-teens get their scheduled immunizations to protect them from this highly contagious disease.”

Parents can obtain the vaccine series and the Tdap booster shot for their children through their primary care physicians. Students who are not covered by a medical insurance plan can get the shot from a local retail pharmacy for a fee, or from a County Public Health center.

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 HHS Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit www.sdiz.org.

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This week's new pertussis cases where there has been a potential for public exposure are:

- A 10-year-old who was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Sage Canyon Elementary School in Del Mar Union School District. Contact: Cara Schukoske (858) 755-9301.
- A 7-year-old who was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Mount Vernon Elementary School in the Lemon Grove School District. Contact: Deborah Burke (619) 825-5610.

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