



To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County

Contact: Cathy Bambrick, Administrator, (509) 962-7515

Date: March 25, 2009

Pertussis case associated with the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District; Activities postponed through April 15, 2009

The Kittitas County Public Health Department has been investigating pertussis in Kittitas County since February 10, 2009. Yesterday, March 24, a case associated with the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District was identified. This is the first known case connected to a school district in Kittitas County outside of the cases previously reported in the Kittitas School District. An additional case within the Kittitas School District community was also identified on March 24. This brings the **total number of cases linked to the current pertussis outbreak to 26.**

Kittitas County Public Health Department is requiring postponement of all field trips and scheduled activities or events that include other schools, school districts, and/or family members of Cle Elum Roslyn School District students between March 25 and April 15, 2009. This precautionary measure will help to prevent the spread of the illness to individuals outside of the Cle Elum Roslyn School District community.

Extracurricular activities that are comprised entirely of Cle Elum Roslyn School District students and staff that are held at the school, such as sports practices, will not be affected. Events including students from other schools will be postponed for all Cle Elum Roslyn School District students, including those who do not have symptoms of illness. This includes sports events.

Pertussis is a very contagious airborne disease. The illness is most severe in children less than one year of age, pregnant women, and individuals with chronic respiratory disease. According to the Washington State Department of Health, approximately 400 to 1000 cases of pertussis are reported in the state of Washington each year.

The most effective way to prevent pertussis is by immunization with vaccines called DTaP for children or Tdap for adolescents and adults. Kittitas County Public Health Department recommends that children, adolescents, and adults who are not up to date with their pertussis immunizations contact their healthcare provider about getting the vaccine.

If you or a family member have any symptoms of pertussis please avoid group activities such as work, school, church, and social events until you can be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Symptoms of pertussis include:

- Cold-like symptoms, followed by a persistent cough. The persistent cough occurs in explosive bursts that may end in vomiting or gagging.
- In adolescents and adults, pertussis may cause only mild cold-like symptoms (runny nose, mild cough, low-grade fever, sneezing) or it may appear as repeated violent coughs followed by a high pitched “whoop” when inhaling.
- In some adolescents and adults, the symptom may only be a persistent cough, often worse at night.

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- Between bursts of coughing, patients may appear well.

Casual contact with a contagious person is usually not enough to cause illness. If you have shared food or beverages or spent an hour or more in a confined space with a contagious individual you may be at higher risk. Kittitas County Public Health Department staff are currently working to contact individuals who have been in contact with the recently identified cases that may be at higher risk of developing pertussis.

For more information you can visit www.pertussis.com/faq.html for information in English, or www.pertussis.com/faq_spanish.html for information in Spanish.

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