

Metropolitan Area Pertussis Surveillance

March 4, 2020

Dear David Douglas High School Community,

A case of pertussis (also known as whooping cough) has been reported at your school.

What is whooping cough? Whooping cough is an infection that causes severe coughing. It spreads easily in groups. Infants and young children can become very ill with this infection, but anyone, young or old, can become ill. Most people get a shot to prevent whooping cough, but protection wears off over time. People vaccinated against whooping cough can still get sick though their symptoms are usually milder.

Symptoms: The illness usually begins with cold-like symptoms, such as a runny nose or an irritating cough. The cough can become severe, with violent episodes of coughing, and can last for weeks to months. Sometimes there can be a “whooping” sound in young children, and some people vomit after coughing. Usually, there is no fever. Vaccinated individuals who get whooping cough may not have these violent coughs, whoop, or vomiting.

Recommendations:

About the vaccine:

- Make sure all of your family members are up to date on immunizations including whooping cough
- A pertussis vaccine is recommended for pregnant women during every pregnancy

For anyone with cold symptoms and a worsening cough of at least a week:

- **Do not go to school, work and other activities until seen by a healthcare provider. People with pertussis are considered contagious until they have completed the five day course of antibiotics.**
- **Avoid contact with children under 1 year of age and pregnant women.**
- **Call your healthcare provider. Please let the provider know about the exposure to whooping cough by mentioning this letter.**

For more information see: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis>

If you or your child has symptoms, or you have other questions or concerns, please call the Metropolitan Area Pertussis Surveillance program at 503-988-8846.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH
Health Officer
Multnomah County Health Department