

## **Maine Center for Disease Control Update: Pertussis is on the rise again in Maine**

**Pertussis (whooping cough) continues to increase in Maine and in many regions of the United States. The majority of reported pertussis infections have occurred in Penobscot County, but sporadic infections have occurred throughout the state. As of November 10, 2011, 163 persons infected with pertussis were reported to Maine CDC, compared to 53 reported for the entire year in 2010. Among the 163 persons reported to have pertussis in 2011, 105 (64%) were residents of Penobscot County. Clusters of pertussis have been reported in schools, camps, sport teams and workplaces.**

According to the CDC, "Pertussis is a communicable, vaccine preventable disease that can last for many weeks. It is transmitted through direct contact with discharges from the respiratory mucous membranes (nose, throat and mouth) of infected persons." In 2005 two tetanus/diphtheria vaccines were approved with a special Pertussis component that could be used to protect older children and adults, referred to as the "Tdap" vaccine. It was also recommended in 2005 that a single dose of Tdap could be used instead of the usual tetanus or "Td" vaccine for vaccinating adolescents ages 11-18. **Inquire about Tdap at your child's next health care provider visit. If it has been more than 5 years since his/her last tetanus or "Td" booster, a Tdap may be indicated. Children under age 7 should be up-to-date for Pertussis immunization.**

**(Please note: this is a current recommendation, not a requirement for school attendance).**

Please contact your health care provider if anyone in your family is ill with an unexplained cough lasting more than 2 weeks especially if accompanied by "spasms" of cough followed by vomiting. Pertussis may be diagnosed by a special swab to the back of the nose and antibiotics may be prescribed for treatment. For more information on Pertussis, log on to <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm>

Source: Maine CDC