



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

Department of Health and Human Services  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
Division of Infectious Disease  
286 Water Street  
11 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011  
Toll Free: 1-800-821-5821  
Toll Free Fax: 1-800-293-7534

To: Parents / Guardians / Students / Staff  
From: Freeport High School  
Subject: Exposure to PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough)  
Date: December 19, 2014

The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) has confirmed a diagnosed case of pertussis, also known as (whooping cough), in students from another district who attend Region 10 with some of our Freeport High School students.

Pertussis is an illness that is spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Pertussis usually begins with symptoms of a common cold (sore throat, and runny nose) and often develops into a severe cough after a few weeks. The cough can last for several weeks or more. Most children are vaccinated against pertussis, but it is still possible for vaccinated children to become ill. Babies are most at risk of serious illness.

To prevent the spread of pertussis in our community, we are making the following recommendations:

1. If your child has a severe cough (may include coughing to the point of gagging, vomiting after coughing or difficulty breathing) or a prolonged cough lasting 2 weeks or longer, please take your child home and contact your health care provider. If your provider suspects pertussis, they will obtain a specimen to be sent for pertussis testing.
2. Children/Adults with severe cough, prolonged cough or confirmed pertussis will be started on antibiotics and will need to remain at home for 5 days while taking these antibiotics.
3. Please check with your medical provider to be sure you and your child are up-to-date on pertussis vaccine. Most children have had vaccine before the age 7 years, but their immunity to the disease may gradually wane over time. Booster shots (Tdap) are now recommended for children 11-18 years old. A single Tdap shot is also recommended for adults, especially adults who have contact with infants and young children.

Additional information is available from Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821 or the website:  
[www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/vaccine/pertussis.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/vaccine/pertussis.shtml)

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Pertussis Fact Sheet](#)

If you have further questions, or if your child is diagnosed with pertussis, please contact:  
Brenda White RN, School Nurse, at FHS, 207-865-4706 ext200.

Thank You, Brenda White, School Nurse  
Brian Campbell, Principal