



Genesee County Health Department

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<http://www.gchd.us>

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Contact Person: Fatema Mamou, MPH, Epidemiologist
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RE: Pertussis Outbreak Escalating

The number of pertussis cases, also known as whooping cough, in Genesee County this year continues to increase, exceeding the highest numbers seen in over 10 years. Ten cases have been reported in the first 10 days of June this year and Genesee County is still seeing a 1500% increase in the disease compared to last year. Many recent cases have been among adolescents and adults. The Genesee County Health Department (GCHD) is reminding everyone that cases of pertussis may continue to be transmitted in group settings over the summer.

It is very important to remember to stay home when you are sick as well as recognize the signs and symptoms of pertussis. Those who develop a cold that includes prolonged or severe cough may have pertussis and should contact their health care provider. People diagnosed with pertussis must complete 5 days of treatment before returning to school, work, or other group settings in order to stop the spread of the disease. Because infants are at most risk of severe disease, parents should keep infants under one year of age away from people with a cough illness.

Vaccination is the best way to decrease the chance of getting pertussis. Protection from the childhood vaccine fades over time. Adolescents and adults need to be revaccinated, even if they were completely vaccinated as children. The booster dose of the vaccine that protects against pertussis (Tdap) is recommended for adolescents and adults aged 11-64 years. There is still a chance that a fully vaccinated person can catch this very contagious disease when pertussis is circulating in the community. Therefore, anyone with signs and symptoms of pertussis should consult a health care provider.

For more information about pertussis see the GCHD website at www.gchd.us.

Better Life Through Better Health