

Anyone can
get Pertussis.



VALUABLE INFORMATION TO HELP
STOP THE SPREAD OF PERTUSSIS
[also known as whooping cough]

ProtectTexas[®]
from the State of Texas

Immunization Division
1100 W. 49th Street
Austin, TX 78756-3199
www.ImmunizeTexas.com



CAN ANYONE GET PERTUSSIS?

Adults and teens get pertussis and often give it to babies, causing serious complications.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Pertussis resembles a cold: runny nose, sneezing, mild fever, and a cough that slowly gets worse.

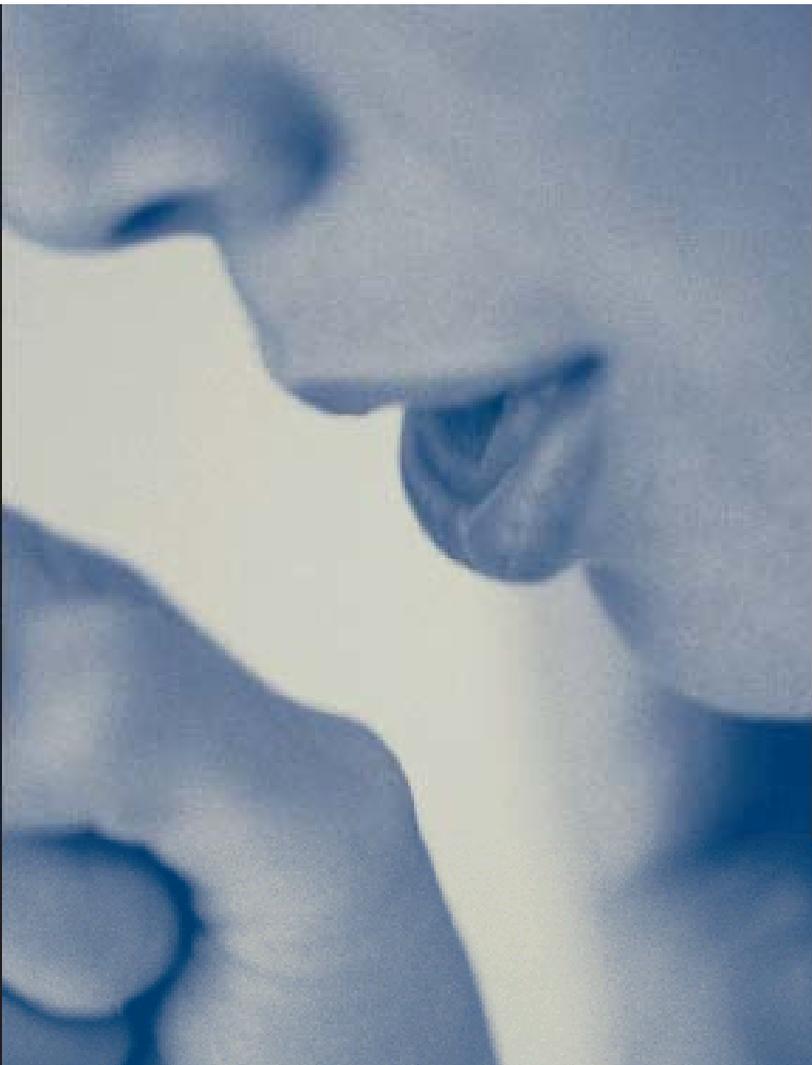
A cough that lasts several weeks may be the only symptom in adults and teens. After one or two weeks, an infected person may develop "coughing fits" which may last six weeks or longer. Usually, there is no fever. After coughing, infected persons may vomit, have difficulty catching their breath, or become blue in the face from lack of air. The cough is often worse at night, and cough medicines usually do not help. Between coughing spells, an infected person may not appear sick.

Adults, teens, and vaccinated children often have milder symptoms that mimic bronchitis or asthma. In some cases, babies may develop apnea (failure to breathe) and may die.

If a cough persists for more than two weeks, consult your doctor.

TEENS AND ADULTS CAN GET PERTUSSIS, TOO

"COUGHING FITS" COULD LAST SIX WEEKS OR LONGER



HOW IS PERTUSSIS DIAGNOSED?

A doctor may diagnose a patient with pertussis from the symptoms. To confirm the diagnosis, the doctor will swab the back of the nose for laboratory testing. It is important to remember that a patient may have pertussis even though the laboratory test is negative.

HOW DOES PERTUSSIS SPREAD?

Like a cold, pertussis spreads into the air when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or talks. That's when others nearby can inhale the bacteria. Touching a tissue or sharing a cup used by someone with pertussis can also spread the disease. The first symptoms usually appear within 5 to 21 days after the initial infection.

CAN PERTUSSIS BE PREVENTED?

Vaccination of children beginning in early infancy can prevent pertussis. The pertussis vaccine is given in the same shot as the diphtheria and tetanus vaccines (called DTaP). Vaccine cannot be given to babies less than six weeks old or to anyone seven years of age or older. Vaccine protection fades over time.

Household members and others in close contact with an infected person can reduce their chances of getting pertussis by taking antibiotics. Persons who have been exposed to pertussis should take antibiotics even if they have been vaccinated against the disease.

DON'T COUGH AROUND BABIES

PERTUSSIS IS PREVENTABLE



HOW CAN BABIES BE PROTECTED?

Most hospitalizations and deaths from pertussis occur in infants under three months of age. That's why it is very important to protect them. So, have babies vaccinated, take them to a doctor when they are sick, and keep them away from anyone who coughs.

And remember, a doctor should see any baby that has a cough.

IS THE PERTUSSIS VACCINE SAFE?

The pertussis vaccine is safe for most children. Doctors recommend that children get vaccinated at 2, 4, 6, and 15 to 18 months old with an additional shot at four to six years old, for a total of five doses. There is a slight risk of side effects caused by the vaccine, but this risk is small when you consider that pertussis is a very serious disease.

Pertussis causes about 10 to 20 deaths each year in the United States. That's why experts recommend that all babies and children get a full series of D'TaP vaccine, unless there are medical reasons not to do so.

WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION?

*Call the Texas Department of Health
Immunization Division at (800) 252-9152
or call your doctor, nurse,
or local health department.*

KEEP BABIES AWAY FROM ANYONE WHO COUGHS

VACCINATE BABIES AT 2, 4, 6 AND 15-18 MONTHS