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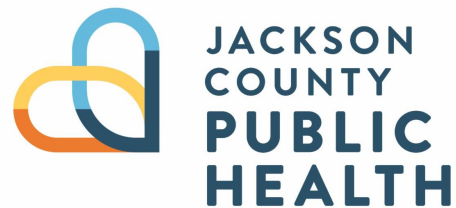
Wednesday, October 2nd, 2024

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Jackson County Public Health Investigates Rising Cases of Pertussis in Community

Lee's Summit, MO: Jackson County Public Health (JCPH) has been notified of a confirmed case of pertussis, also known as whooping cough, associated with a student at Blue Springs High School. JCPH is currently working in partnership with the school district to curb further infections among the greater community.

“Pertussis is a contagious respiratory illness that may initially seem like a common cold,” says Bridgette Shaffer, Health Director at Jackson County Public Health. “This disease can have very serious complications, especially for infants or for those with chronic health conditions like asthma.”

While pertussis cases remain generally low, health department staff have seen increased numbers of pertussis cases over the past four weeks.

Symptoms of pertussis may include:

- **Runny nose**
- **Mild cough that gradually gets worse**
- **Low-grade fever**
- **Coughing “fits” that can cause vomiting or gagging**
- **A whooping sound during coughing fits**
- **Inability to breathe (in infants and small children)**
- **A cough that lasts up to 10 weeks**

The onset of pertussis symptoms typically begins within seven to ten days post-exposure. It spreads when an infected person coughs, sneezes, breathes, or talks, releasing droplets breathed in by those nearby. Those with mild symptoms may unknowingly pass the disease on to others.

Early antibiotic treatment is generally recommended, especially in infants and young children. The best protection against pertussis is vaccination (DTaP and Tdap), which many children receive in infancy and before starting school.

Certain populations are at higher risk for serious complications from pertussis, including:

- **Infants younger than 12 months old**
- **Those in the third trimester of pregnancy**
- **Immunocompromised individuals**
- **Anyone with pre-existing health conditions that may be aggravated by pertussis infection, such as those with respiratory conditions like asthma or COPD**

If you are exposed to pertussis and develop symptoms:

- **Contact your medical provider, mention this advisory, and ask to be assessed and tested for pertussis.**
- If your doctor believes you have pertussis, they will likely perform testing to confirm the diagnosis and prescribe a five-day course of antibiotics. Stay home from school, camp, work, and all other activities until the full five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed. After completing your course of antibiotics, you may return to community activities, even if pertussis results are not back yet.
- If your doctor believes you do not have pertussis, take general precautions to avoid making others ill.

JCPH is extending resources and support to those affected. Further information about pertussis can be found on the [CDC's website](#) or by calling JCPH's Communicable Disease Hotline at **(816) 404-9898**.

Jackson County Public Health remains committed to safeguarding public health. We will continue to collaborate with the Blue Springs School District to mitigate the impact of pertussis in the community.



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PUBLIC HEALTH**

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