

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 06/24/2019**

TO: Grant County Healthcare Providers

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT**Kari Hitzroth, RN, Public Health Nurse  
509-766-7960 ext. 13

## **GCHD Staff are Investigating 1 Laboratory Confirmed Pertussis Case in Moses Lake, WA**

**GRANT COUNTY, WA** –Grant County Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Brzezny, has issued the following alert to the Grant County healthcare community: Grant County Health District (GCHD) staff are investigating a reported laboratory-confirmed case of pertussis (whooping cough) in a young child. **There is the potential for more cases to occur.** All family members and close contacts to the individual have been notified by GCHD and offered post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) with antibiotics.

### **Actions requested and testing for providers**

**Consider a diagnosis of pertussis in patients with unexplained cough, especially if greater than 2 weeks in duration.** When evaluating patients suspected for pertussis, please test, treat, and isolate those who are symptomatic. **Always use face masks when attending to any patients with cough. Practitioners evaluating contacts to a recent case of pertussis should also consider a post-exposure prophylaxis with appropriate antibiotics.** Generally, a 5-day regimen of azithromycin is preferred over other regimens, unless contraindicated. **The priority for post-exposure prophylaxis** should be assigned to those who may transmit pertussis to persons at high risk for pertussis. High risk is defined as:

1. Infants < 1 year old.
2. Pregnant women (particularly in their third trimester).
3. Anyone who may expose infants < 1 year old or pregnant women.
  - a. e.g., members of a household with infants or pregnant women,
  - b. child care workers who take care of infants < 1 year old,
  - c. health care workers and childbirth educators with face-to-face contact with infants < 1 year old or pregnant women.

**It is appropriate to offer vaccine (DTaP or Tdap, depending on age) to all individuals without a proof of immunity.**

Symptoms of pertussis usually develop within 5 to 10 days but can present up to 3 weeks following exposure.

**Early symptoms** can last for 1 to 2 weeks and usually include:

- Runny nose
- Low-grade fever (generally minimal throughout the course of the disease)
- Mild, occasional cough
- Apnea – a pause in breathing (in babies)

Because pertussis in its early stages appears to be nothing more than the common cold, it is often not suspected or diagnosed until the more severe symptoms appear.

**Late symptoms-** After 1 to 2 weeks and as the disease progresses, the traditional symptoms of pertussis may appear and include:

- Paroxysms (fits) of many, rapid coughs followed by a high-pitched "whoop"
- Vomiting during or after coughing fits
- Exhaustion after coughing fits

### **Resources**

[Washington State Department of Health report guidelines](#) | WA- DOH

[Vaccination Information for Healthcare Professionals](#) | CDC

### **Consultation**

Kari Hitzroth, RN, Public Health Nurse

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