

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 6/27/2024

TO: Grant Co. Media & Grant Co.
Healthcare Community.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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Public Health Illness Concerns in Grant County

Chickenpox · Whooping Cough

Chickenpox: Increase of Cases in Grant County; Outbreak Being Investigated in Warden

Grant County, WA – Grant County Health District (GCHD) staff have been responding to an increase in chickenpox (varicella) cases in Grant County over the past several months. GCHD has investigated reports of chickenpox in multiple parts of the county and is currently managing a chickenpox outbreak occurring at a childcare center in Warden. This outbreak is affecting several children who were not yet eligible for the chickenpox vaccine.

GCHD urges all eligible residents to get up to date on the chickenpox vaccine if they have not had chickenpox yet. By getting vaccinated, you help protect the most vulnerable groups who cannot receive this layer of protection. Usually, 2 doses of chickenpox vaccine are needed for full protection. Children get their first dose at 1 year of age and their second dose at the age of 4.

“The chickenpox vaccine is extremely effective in preventing the disease. We encourage you to review your family’s immunization records and schedule an appointment for anyone not up to date with their chickenpox vaccine”. Theresa Adkinson, Grant County Health District Administrator.

About Chickenpox - Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease that can have serious complications, including death. The virus spreads mainly through close contact with someone who has chickenpox.

Chickenpox Symptoms – Chickenpox usually causes the following symptoms:

- An itchy rash of blisters
- Headache
- Fever
- Feeling tired

After exposure to chickenpox, it can take 10 to 21 days for symptoms to develop. Chickenpox is contagious for two days before the rash appears.

Prevent The Spread - If you have chickenpox, you should not return to any public setting until:

- Your fever is gone AND
- All blisters have scabbed over (usually 7 days).

High-Risk Groups – The following groups are at risk for serious or life-threatening illness from chickenpox and are not eligible for the vaccine.

- People with weakened immune systems
- Newborns
- Pregnant People

Chickenpox (Varicella) Vaccine – Before vaccination was available, chickenpox made over 4 million people sick each year. This vaccine has reduced disease cases by over 97%.

While some vaccinated people may still get chickenpox, the symptoms are typically milder, with fewer blisters and little to no fever. If you have questions about the chickenpox vaccine, consult your healthcare provider.

Getting vaccinated can prevent chickenpox if given within 5 days of exposure.

Exclusion From School - If there is an increase in cases at a school, those without evidence of immunity are likely to be excluded from school and other public settings for 21 days or longer. Please verify that all children in your family are up to date on vaccinations before school starts in the fall.

Child Care Vaccines Required Chart for Parents



Instructions: To see which vaccines are required for child care, find your child's age on the left column and look at that row going across the chart to find the vaccines and doses needed. Children must meet minimum vaccine series time intervals and ages for the requirements. Please talk to your health care provider or child care provider if you have questions.

	Hepatitis B	DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)	Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type B)	Polio	PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate)	MMR (Measles, Mumps Rubella)	Varicella (Chickenpox)
By 3 Months	2 doses	1 dose	1 dose	1 dose	1 dose	Not routinely given before 12 months of age	Not routinely given before 12 months of age
By 5 Months	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses		
By 7 Months	2 doses	3 doses	2 or 3 doses**	2 doses	3 doses		
By 16 Months	2 doses	3 doses	3 or 4 doses**	2 doses	4 doses**	1 dose	1 dose
By 19 Months	3 doses	4 doses	3 or 4 doses**	3 doses	4 doses**	1 dose	1 dose
By 7 years or preschool/school entry at ≥ 4 years*	3 doses	5 doses**	Not routinely given to children age 5 years and older	4 doses**	Not routinely given to children age 5 years and older	2 doses	2 doses

Evidence of Immunity -

- Documentation of age-appropriate varicella vaccination:
 - Age 12 months – <4 years: 1 dose (2 doses will be necessary during an outbreak)
 - 4 years and older, school-age, adolescents and adults: 2 doses
- Laboratory blood test with evidence of immunity (or prior disease)
- Birth in the United States before 1980 (Does not apply during most outbreaks, in health care personnel, in pregnant people and people who are immunocompromised.)

- Diagnosis or verification of a history of varicella or herpes zoster by a healthcare provider

Resources –

- [Childhood Vaccine Program](#)
 - The Washington State Childhood Vaccination Program provides vaccines to children 18 years of age and younger at no cost. Chickenpox vaccine is included in this program.
- [School Immunization Requirements](#)



Whooping Cough: Confirmed Cases Identified in Grant County

GRANT COUNTY, WA – Grant County Health District (GCHD) staff are responding to whooping cough (pertussis) in three Grant County residents. The disease has been confirmed by a laboratory test in two persons and is suspected in one. The three are linked and occurred in the Moses Lake area. Immediate action has been taken to notify others who may have been in contact with these individuals. This discovery is an indication that whooping cough is currently present in Grant County communities and should be considered in any persons with unexplained cough.

The whooping cough vaccine is the best protection we have against the infection. GCHD urges you to get the whooping cough vaccine if you are not up to date. GCHD asks that healthcare providers consider whooping cough in any patient who shows symptoms and immediately notify GCHD of the suspected infection. Contact GCHD - (509) 766-7960.

About Whooping Cough – Whooping cough is a serious and highly contagious infection. It is mostly spread through coughing or sneezing.

Whooping Cough Symptoms - Symptoms of whooping cough 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
- Mild, occasional cough
- Apnea – a pause in breathing (in babies)

Late symptoms – More traditional symptoms of whooping cough may appear after 1 to 2 weeks of the infection. These include:

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

The best way to know if you have whooping cough is to see your healthcare provider.

Whooping Cough Vaccine – There are two vaccines that protect against whooping cough:

- DTaP is for babies and children younger than seven years.
- Tdap is for kids seven years and older, adolescents, and adults (including pregnant people).
 - **Pregnant people need Tdap with each pregnancy.**
 - If you were vaccinated as a teenager (11 or older), you do not need an additional dose as an adult unless you are pregnant.

High-Risk Groups – The whooping cough vaccine protects you and those most vulnerable to severe illness. Groups at greatest risk from whooping cough include:

- Infants under one year old
 - Pregnant people (especially in the third trimester)
 - People who have chronic respiratory illness
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Treatment - Whooping cough can be treated with antibiotics. It's important to start treatment as soon as possible to help keep from spreading the disease to others. Early treatment can also make the symptoms end sooner and be less severe.

If prescribed antibiotics for whooping cough, you should finish the entire prescription as directed by your healthcare provider. Antibiotics are not recommended for the general public.

Resources:

[Information for Pregnant People | Washington State Department of Health](#)
[Information for Parents About Whooping Cough \(pertussis\) | Washington State Department of Health](#)
[Pertussis Fact Sheet \(wa.gov\)](#)

Resources for Healthcare Providers:

[Washington State Department of Health report guidelines](#) | WA- DOH
[Vaccination Information for Healthcare Professionals](#) | CDC
[Specimen collection and Submission Instructions](#) | WA- DOH
[Best Practices for Healthcare Professionals on the Use of Polymerase Chain Reaction \(PCR\) for Diagnosing Pertussis](#) | CDC
[Pertussis: Key Messages for Healthcare Providers in Washington](#)
2024 GCHD Pertussis Provider Alerts:

- [Pertussis_ProviderAlert_2_21_24.pdf \(granthealth.org\)](#)
- [DOH_Pertussis_Provider_5_15_24.pdf \(granthealth.org\)](#)
