

PERTUSSIS ADVISORY

2017 November 22

To: Health Care Colleagues – Family Physicians, Paediatricians, After Hours Clinics,
Nurse Practitioners, Community Health Centres, QHC [ERs, ICP, Patient Services]

From: Dr. Ian Gemmill, Acting Medical Officer of Health

On Wednesday November 21, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) received notification of one laboratory confirmed case, and one epidemiologically-linked case of *Bordetella pertussis* in the Centre Hastings school area.

As a result, you may see children and adults presenting with pertussis like symptoms. If so, we encourage you to test, to treat and to immunize for pertussis.

The clinical course of pertussis is divided into three stages:

1. The Catarrhal stage is characterized by mild upper respiratory tract symptoms with a mild occasional cough that lasts approximately 1-2 weeks and then progresses to the next stage;
2. The Paroxysmal stage presents with an increase in the severity and frequency of the cough, which can last 1 to 2 months and sometimes longer; paroxysms are characterized by repeated violent coughs and a high pitched inspiratory whoop may occur, commonly followed by vomiting; fever is absent or minimal
3. The Convalescent stage is the gradual recovery period where the cough becomes less paroxysmal and disappears. This stage lasts weeks to months.

Laboratory testing, using nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs, should be done only on patients with clinical signs and symptoms. Nasopharyngeal kits for *B.pertussis* can be ordered from the Kingston Public Health Laboratory by calling 613-548-6630 (toll free 1-855-546-4745). Optimal timing for PCR testing for pertussis is within three weeks of cough onset when bacterial DNA is present in the nasopharynx. PCR testing following antibiotic therapy is NOT recommended, as the exact duration of positivity is not well understood. For additional information: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Pertussis_Case_Contact_Management.pdf

Pertussis is a reportable disease in Ontario. Suspect cases of pertussis are to be reported to HPEPH by calling the Communicable Disease Intake Line at 613-966-5500 x349.

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) is providing immunization clinics at affected Centre Hastings schools today to students who are not up to date with pertussis vaccine. Pertussis vaccine is available at no cost for children and adults.

For more information contact HPEPH at 613-966-5500:

- For questions regarding pertussis immunization, call the Vaccine Preventable Disease Team x313.
- For case and contact treatment guidelines, call the Communicable Disease Team x349.

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