

Whooping cough identified in Bancroft area school

There has been a confirmed outbreak of pertussis (whooping cough) identified in a school in the Bancroft area.

Please contact your health care provider if your child develops signs of pertussis which typically begins with a runny nose and cough. The cough may become more frequent and severe after the first one to two weeks. The cough may end in gagging, vomiting, or trouble breathing. Sometimes, after a coughing attack, the child may give a loud 'whoop' when breathing in, which is why the infection has been called 'whooping cough'.

Pertussis is spread easily through droplets in the air from coughing or sneezing by an infected person. Pertussis is most contagious during the first two weeks after coughing starts.

Anyone can get pertussis, but it is most dangerous for children under a year old. Adults and older children that are around infants and young children should be vaccinated. Children who have not received immunization against pertussis, or whose immunization is incomplete, are at increased risk of developing the disease. Please speak to your health care provider or call public health for information.

If your child is diagnosed with pertussis, please contact your school and call the public health communicable disease program at 613-966-5500 ext. 349. Your child will need to be started on antibiotics and will need to stay home for five days after starting the antibiotics.

Children who are between the ages of four and six years who have not received their fifth dose of diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and polio (Adacel-Polio) vaccine, usually given between four and six years of age, should get that vaccination now.

When your child receives an immunization, please advise Public Health at 613-966-5500 ext. 221 so that we can update your child's record.

For questions on vaccinations please call the Immunization Intake Line: 613-966-5500 ext. 313.