

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Pertussis (also called whooping cough) has been reported among students at Win-E-Mac School and in our community.

Pertussis can be a serious bacterial illness. Pertussis may begin with a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly a low-grade fever. After 1 or 2 weeks, the cough worsens and begins to occur in sudden, uncontrollable bursts. These coughing attacks can end in vomiting and/or in a high-pitched whooping noise. Coughing attacks often happen at night. Older children and adults may have a less typical cough. The cough can continue for up to 3 months.

Persons with pertussis should not go to school, work, or any activities until they have finished 5 days of antibiotic treatment, unless the person has already been coughing for 3 or more weeks. Although the cough can last longer than 3 weeks, a person is no longer contagious after the third week.

Pertussis can be less severe in adults and older children and when not recognized and treated, can be easily passed on to infants, who may become very ill.

If you or your child have a cough and have had contact with someone with pertussis or has been coughing for 7 days or longer, discuss pertussis with your healthcare provider.

Most children have been vaccinated for pertussis, but protection can decrease over time. People who have completed some or all of the recommended vaccinations for pertussis may still get pertussis disease but will generally have a milder illness. Now is a good time to make sure you are up to date on your pertussis vaccines.

For information on how to access your or your family's immunization records, visit [Find My Immunization Record \(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/records.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/records.html).

More information on pertussis (whooping cough) can be found at [Pertussis \(Whooping Cough\) \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/pertussis/index.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/pertussis/index.html).

Questions from you or your healthcare provider can be directed to: Holly Blilie, RN at Polk County Public Health (218)281-3385; Amy Van Den Einde, RN at PCPH and School Nurse at Win-E-Mac School. You may also contact the Minnesota Department of Health at 1-877-676-5414.

Sincerely,
Amy Van Den Einde, BSN, RN
Licensed School Nurse

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