

Date: 2 June 2014
To: Health Care Providers
From: Alvaro Garza, MD, MPH, Health Officer

Please distribute to all providers and relevant medical staff in your office.

HEALTH ADVISORY

Pertussis Increase in San Joaquin County

Situation: As of 28 May 2014, 54 cases of pertussis have been reported in county residents this year, compared to 27 for all of year 2013. Five cases have been in infants under one year of age, and three of those were less than two months old. Incidence has been higher in south county communities, particularly Manteca and Tracy. The increase is statewide, with 2,649 cases reported for the same period to the California Department of Public Health.

Background: Pertussis infections peak in incidence every three to five years. The last peak was in 2010 so this may be a new cyclical peaking. Infants too young to be fully immunized remain the most vulnerable to severe and fatal pertussis and the group we should protect the most.

Actions Requested of Clinicians:

Prevent: Vaccinate all women, irrespective of the immunization history, with Tdap during every pregnancy between 27 and 36 weeks gestation to optimize antibody transfer and protection of infants at birth. Advise that anyone in contact with newborns should also be up-to-date with their Tdap. Vaccinate young infants promptly with DTaP. The first dose is recommended at two months of age, but can be given as early as six weeks of age, especially to infants whose mothers did not receive Tdap during pregnancy.

Suspect pertussis with acute cough illnesses, even in recently vaccinated people and regardless of age. Around 80-85% of vaccinees develop immunity and it wanes within a few years.

Test suspected cases. Obtain a nasal aspirate or nasopharyngeal swab for PCR or culture.

Treat: initiate antibiotic treatment prior to obtaining test results, especially in infants and pregnant women or those in close contact with them. Azithromycin is preferred because of efficacy and compliance. Provide antibiotic prophylaxis to household contacts, caregivers, and other persons who have had direct contact with respiratory, oral, or nasal secretions and aerosols from a symptomatic case, especially if there is an infant or pregnant woman in the home. Dosage and duration for antibiotic prophylaxis is the same as for treatment.

Report suspect pertussis cases to San Joaquin County Public Health Services by telephone (workday: 209-468-3822).

Advise all of proper respiratory hygiene: cover your cough, cough into your elbow, wash hands often, and stay home from school or work when ill.

Additional resources:

- California Department of Public Health:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/clinical/index.html>

Attachment:

San Joaquin County Public Health Services, Pertussis Fact Sheet