

PULASKI COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NURSE'S OFFICE

December 2010

PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH) EXPOSURE

Dear Parents:

The following information is for families that have been notified that their child has been exposed to a confirmed case of pertussis (whooping cough) either in their classroom or by close social contact.

We recommend that your child receive appropriate preventive treatment. Please call your physician and inform him or her that your child has been exposed to a positive case of pertussis. Your physician can prescribe the appropriate antibiotic.

Pertussis is spread through the air by direct face-to-face contact with the person who is ill. Pertussis begins with cold-like symptoms and a cough, which becomes much worse over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms usually include a long series of coughs ("coughing spasms") followed by a whooping noise. However, older children, adults, and very young infants may not develop the whoop. There is generally no fever. People with pertussis may have a repetitive cough accompanied by gagging, vomiting, or difficulty catching breath. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help alleviate the cough. The disease is most serious in un-immunized infants and preschoolers. If you have preschool children at home, make sure they are up-to-date with their immunizations.

If you develop symptoms suggestive of pertussis, please stay at home – no school, work or social activities until pertussis disease has been ruled out or you have completed 5 days of antibiotic treatment.

If you live in Brown County: Any questions you may have about this notice can be directed to the Brown County Health Department at 920-448-6400.

If you live in Oconto County: Any questions you may have about this notice can be directed to the Oconto County Health Department at 920-834-7000.

If you live in Shawano County: Any questions you may have about this notice can be directed to the Shawano County Health Department at 715-526-4808.

The following link is to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health - disease fact sheet - regarding pertussis and its treatment.

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/factsheets/pertussis.htm>