

## WHOOPING COUGH (Pertussis) INFORMATION

Whooping cough (Pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection that is caused by bacteria and is sometimes identified by a persistent cough and a “whoop” sound during the next breath in.

The incident of whooping cough has been increasing, primarily among young children who have not completed needed immunizations. Also in teenagers and adults whose immunity to the disease has faded. Because of this rise in whooping cough it is now required for children 11-12 years of age to receive a booster called the TDap: which includes the pertussis. It is also recommended that adults receive that vaccine if it has been more than 10 years since their last tetanus shot or they are around small children and infants.

The most common symptom for whooping cough is a persistent dry cough other initial symptoms include:

- \*Runny nose
- \*Nasal congestion
- \*Sneezing
- \*Red, watery eyes
- \*A mild fever

\*After two weeks symptoms worsen and the student may also have the following symptoms

- \*Thick mucus from cough
- \*Vomiting
- \*Red or blue face from cough
- \*Extreme fatigue
- \*End cough with a high pitched “whoop” sound during the next breath of air

If you notice any of these symptoms please see a doctor as soon as possible. Whooping Cough is usually diagnosed through nose or throat cultures, blood tests and chest x-rays. Treatment consists of antibiotics to fight the infection and cough relief medication. Immediate family members are usually given preventative antibiotics as well. If you have any further questions about whooping cough or required immunizations for your child please see your physician or school nurse.

Reference: Mayoclinic.com