



NORTH SHORE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Shore Health Department Warns of Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Cases in the Whitefish Bay - May 3, 2024

Considering recent developments, the North Shore Health Department is alerting the community about an increase in reported cases of pertussis, also known as whooping cough. Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory illness that can be serious, especially for infants, young children, and individuals with compromised immune systems. "Our primary aim is to ensure that residents are well-informed about the signs and symptoms of pertussis, enabling them to promptly seek medical attention if they suspect exposure or infection," stated Health Officer Becky Rowland.

Symptoms of pertussis typically manifest as follows:

- Initial cold-like symptoms like runny nose, mild cough, and sneezing.
- Progression to severe coughing spells, often accompanied by a distinctive high-pitched "whooping" sound, vomiting post-coughing fits, and profound exhaustion.
 - While infants may not exhibit the characteristic whoop, they may struggle with breathing.

It is essential to note that pertussis is preventable through vaccination. The North Shore Health Department strongly advises the following measures:

- Ensuring all children are up to date with their pertussis (DTaP) vaccinations.
 - Check the Wisconsin Department of Health Services [Wisconsin Immunization Registry](#) if you have questions about vaccination status.
- Adults and adolescents (preferably at age 11 or 12) should get the Tdap booster vaccine.
- Pregnant women should receive the Tdap vaccine during each pregnancy.

Should you or your child exhibit symptoms indicative of pertussis, please contact your healthcare provider right away and exclude the sick individual from all activities until medically cleared. Additionally, timely intervention with antibiotics can significantly mitigate the severity and spread of the illness.

As always, and to help stop the spread please practice good hygiene to prevent the spread of all respiratory illnesses, including pertussis.:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put your used tissue in the waste basket right away.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands, if you don't have a tissue.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use an alcohol-based hand rub if soap and water are not available.

For comprehensive information on pertussis and vaccination protocols, please visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/pertussis.htm> or call us at NSHD (414) 371-2980.

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