



What You Need To Know About Pertussis (Whooping Cough).

What is Pertussis?

- Pertussis is also known as **whooping cough**. It is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection that can be a serious health threat, especially for infants.
- Florida has 145 reported cases of whooping cough (pertussis) this year, with 23 cases reported in infants less than 3 months of age.
- Pertussis is contagious before severe coughing starts.
- Family members are most often the transmission source of whooping cough (pertussis) to infants.

How can Pertussis be prevented?

- The best way to prevent whooping cough (pertussis) is through immunizations.
- Infants and children receive a series of 4-5 doses of **DTaP** (a diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis,) vaccine, with a booster at 10 to 11 years of age. *However, protection provided by the childhood series fades over time.*
- All persons age 11-64 can get a booster called **TDaP**, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis.
- Parents, childcare workers and healthcare providers are advised to verify the children they care for are properly immunized against whooping cough (pertussis).

What are the symptoms of Pertussis?

- Symptoms start with:
 - cough
 - runny nose
 - lasting for one-to-two weeks
- Symptoms followed by:
 - rapid coughing fits
 - coughing ending with a whooping sound
 - lasting weeks-to-months.

Where can more information on Pertussis be found?

- Additional information about immunizations and whooping cough can be found at: <http://www.immunizeFlorida.com/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Pertussis>