



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 7, 2019

Public Health Services seeing increase in whooping cough cases

HAMILTON, ON – Public Health Services is responding to an increase in whooping cough (Pertussis) cases in Hamilton. There have been five confirmed cases of whooping cough since mid-May 2019.

Vaccination against whooping cough is an important measure to protect individuals and reduce the spread of the infection within the community. The vaccine that protects against whooping cough (pertussis) is called Tdap, and includes a booster dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis.

Public Health Services reminds individuals to take preventive measures to protect against whooping cough by ensuring they are up to date on the Tdap vaccine. **Due to waning immunity, previously immunized adolescents and adults, may also be at risk.** Public Health recommends that any child 12 years of age or older who hasn't had their booster vaccine for pertussis since ages four to six to get a Tdap booster vaccine by contacting their primary care provider (family physician, nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic).

Whooping cough is a very contagious disease of the lungs and the throat. Whooping cough is spread from person to person as a result of coughing, especially in the first two weeks of infection. It primarily affects children less than seven years of age who do not have immunity through vaccination. Fully vaccinated children or adults, can still get the infection due to decreased immunity over time, but if they do get infected they generally experience less severe illness with fewer complications.

Quick Facts

- Vaccinating against whooping cough is the most important measure to protect individuals and reduce the spread of infection within the community.
- The vaccine for pertussis, Tdap, is included in the vaccines normally given at 2, 4, 6, and 18 months, school-entry (4-6 years) and again no later than 10 years after.
- Due to waning immunity, previously immunized adolescents and adults, may also be at increased risk of infection.
- Adults who have not received any doses of pertussis-containing vaccine, are eligible for one dose.
- Pregnant women will also receive the Tdap vaccine as part of their prenatal care.

Additional Resources

For information and questions about whooping cough (Pertussis) please call the Public Health Services Infectious Disease program: 905-546-2063.

[Learn more about Pertussis](#)

Quotes

“This is a good reminder for parents to ensure their child’s vaccinations are up to date. Vaccination against whooping cough is an important measure to protect community health and reduce the spread of illness within the community.”

Dr. Bart Harvey

Associate Medical Officer of Health