



## PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough)

Date:

Dear Parent:

A child at day care has been diagnosed with ***Pertussis***. Pertussis is a serious childhood disease that can be prevented through immunization. Symptoms begin like a normal cold (cough, sneezing, runny nose, low-grade fever) and are followed by a persistent cough and occur in explosive bursts ending with the typical high-pitched whoop and occasionally vomiting. Between bursts of coughing, the child appears well.

Coughing attacks continue to occur for four to six weeks. Pertussis is frequently complicated by pneumonia and ear infections, particularly in infants. Death from Pertussis is rare. Infected people are contagious from the early coughing stage to three weeks after beginning of coughing fits in people who do not receive antibiotic treatment. People treated with antibiotics are contagious for only five to seven days. The National Immunization Practices Advisory Committee (ACIP) recommends that your child be immunized against Pertussis in four doses beginning as early as six weeks of age with the Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP) vaccine. The first three doses are given at one to two month intervals and the fourth dose should be given 12 months after the third dose. The vaccination should be complete by age six. Approximately 5% of immunized children may still become infected with mumps because sometimes vaccines fail.

If your child is less than one year of age or unimmunized and less than seven years of age, your physician may want to start them on antibiotic treatment for preventative measures.

Day care immunization records indicate that he/she needs DTP vaccination dose ?1 ?2 ?3 ?4 at this time to remain protected.

If your child is not protected, contact your physician or the Health District to have your child immunized. Children who are not adequately immunized may be excluded from any childcare center. Please notify your childcare operator when your child is immunized.

If your child develops any of the symptoms, keep him/her at home and consult your doctor for diagnosis.

If you have any questions, please call your local Health District office.