



Orange County

ATTENTION

EDWARD A. DIANA
County Executive

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

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Commissioner of Health

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PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE, PRIMARY CARE, EMERGENCY ROOM, INTERNAL MEDICINE, INFECTIOUS DISEASE, OB/GYN AND AMBULATORY CARE STAFF.

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT #1

Pertussis Cases Increasing in Orange County

In 2011, 36 cases of pertussis were reported in Orange County but **25 of them were in the last two months of the year** (cough onset).

Each case is investigated by a public health nurse to ensure that **all close contacts can be prophylaxed.**

This is the reason that confirmation by testing is so important, rather than just treating presumptively.

Please consider a diagnosis of pertussis whenever a child or adult presents with a chronic cough and test for pertussis prior to the initiation of antibiotic treatment. Testing should be done on nasopharyngeal specimens obtained by using Calgiswabs, not cotton swabs. Acceptable diagnostic methods for pertussis include polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and culture.

Serology and direct fluorescent antibody (DFA) are not reliable testing methods. Neither is recommended for diagnosis of pertussis.

- Delay in recognition contributes to bad clinical outcomes.
- Have PCR kits in your office ready to test (order from your lab).
- Characteristic “whoop” is absent in young babies, symptoms may initially be mild i.e. coryza with little or no fever.
- Antibiotic regimens for prophylaxis and treatment are the same.
- Tdap vaccine should be given to postpartum women before hospital discharge and to household and caregiver contacts of infants less than one year, including those over 65 years.
- ACIP and ACOG support giving Tdap to pregnant women in the second or third trimester under some circumstances.
- Report all suspect, probable or confirmed pertussis cases to the Orange County Department of Health at (845) 291-2330.

Please call the Nursing Division at (845) 291-2330 if you have further questions.