



FACT SHEET: Whooping Cough, (*Bordetella pertussis*),

Bordetella pertussis is the organism that causes Whooping Cough and can be highly contagious in its early stages. Most people have been vaccinated against Pertussis but there can be breakthrough cases that tend to be much milder. If any case of Whooping Cough is reported in a school building the Westchester County Department of Health will be consulted immediately.

If exposed, please monitor for the following symptoms which usually start within 5-10 days, but can occur in stages:

Stage 1: Cold symptoms last 1-2 weeks	Stage 2: Lasts 2-10 weeks	Stage 3: Lasts 2-3 weeks
Runny nose	Fits numerous rapid coughs followed by a "whoop" sound	Coughing lessens, but fits of coughing may continue
Low-grade fever	Vomiting	
Mild Occasional cough	Exhaustion	
Apnea, (periods of not breathing) in babies and young children	Coughing can occur	

If your child develops any symptoms please keep them home and call your healthcare provider.

Whooping Cough, (Pertussis) is spread by:

- Airborne, breathing next to a person
- Droplets and respiratory secretions-someone coughs or sneezes

Individuals at High Risk: Always consult with your doctor with any questions or concerns. Serious and sometimes deadly complications in babies and young children especially if they are not fully vaccinated. Anyone with an immune deficiency, pregnancy, or the elderly should also contact their healthcare provider if a contact right away. Teens and adults can also get complications such as pneumonia and the severe cough can cause people to pass out, fracture a rib, lose bladder control and lose weight.

Prevention:

- Vaccination is the best way to prevent being infected
- Antibiotics may be prescribed for close contacts, (the DOH will guide us)
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based sanitizer
- Avoid people who are infected

Return to school: A letter of clearance is required to return to school. Your child must feel well and have minimal symptoms.

Any questions please email/call your school nurse, (found on your home school website).

For more information: [Whooping Cough \(Pertussis\) | CDC](#)