

PERTUSSIS INCREASING IN MECOSTA COUNTY AMISH COMMUNITY

February 21, 2019 – District Health Department #10 has received increased reports of pertussis and suspected pertussis (also known as Whooping Cough) in Mecosta County. These cases are primarily affecting families in the Amish Community at this time. Additional cases are likely to be reported. DHD#10 is currently working with the Amish community to help resolve the situation and prevent further spread.

Pertussis starts out like the common cold. The initial symptoms last a week. A cough that is often severe then develops and can last as long as twelve weeks. Young infants can have difficulty breathing, may need to be hospitalized, and may even die due to whooping cough. This disease is very contagious and is spread by respiratory droplets from coughing. People with pertussis can transmit the germ for three weeks after becoming ill.

The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated. We recommend that parents review their children's immunization records to be certain they have received all of their immunizations. Children usually receive a series of the vaccine in early infancy and another dose before starting school. Adolescents and adults also need to get a booster dose to help protect them as they get older.

Anyone with pertussis should stay home until five days of antibiotic treatment has been completed. People that live with someone with pertussis should talk to their doctor about receiving a course of antibiotics to prevent the spread of the infection. Adults and children who have had pertussis previously could still potentially get it again or spread it to others without having symptoms of the disease themselves. If you have questions about pertussis, please contact your family doctor or your local health department branch office.

About DHD #10

District Health Department #10 (DHD #10) is Michigan's largest geographical health department, mandated to promote and protect the public from unsafe and hazardous conditions and provide methods of promoting good health and disease prevention. Some of the vital programs provided by DHD #10 include Immunizations, Infectious Disease Control, STI Testing and Counseling, WIC, Maternal Infant Health Program, Healthy Families Northern Michigan, Children's Special Health Services, Hearing and Vision Screening, Family Planning, Cancer Screening, Worksite Wellness, Smoking Cessation, Substance Use Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention, and Environmental Health Services. DHD #10 serves Crawford, Kalkaska, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Newaygo, Oceana, and Wexford counties. For more information, visit www.dhd10.org.

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