

What to Know About Pertussis

Pertussis (puhr-tus-sis) also called “whooping cough”, is a serious disease that may cause severe coughing that can last for weeks or months.

What do symptoms of pertussis disease look like?

- Violent coughing.
- Low-grade fever.
- Sneezing.
- Runny nose.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Coughing fits.

Can children get pertussis?

Yes, anyone can get pertussis at any age. Infants are at high risk for severe pertussis and death. Symptoms in babies may look different. Babies may stop breathing (apnea), which is dangerous and requires immediate medical attention.

Is my family or am I at risk of getting pertussis?

Pertussis is common and very contagious. A person with pertussis can infect others for weeks.

What are long term effects of pertussis disease?

Pertussis can cause serious complications in babies and young children.

- Apnea (stops breathing).
- Pneumonia (lung infection).
- Convulsions (seizures).
- Brain damage.
- Death.

Can you prevent pertussis?

Yes, there are vaccines that can prevent pertussis disease.

How do you treat pertussis?

Antibiotics are necessary to treat pertussis disease. Starting antibiotics early can help lessen the severity of disease. Hospitalization of infants may be required to manage severe symptoms.

How to Prevent Pertussis

What vaccines are available to prevent pertussis?

There are vaccines to prevent pertussis. Talk with your healthcare provider which vaccines you or your child should get.

Who should get vaccinated and when?

Everyone should get vaccinated against pertussis. Children often need multiple doses for full protection. Adults may need doses too, including pregnant women. Talk with your healthcare provider about your family’s vaccination options.

Why should my child get vaccinated?

It is important that everyone is vaccinated to protect the vulnerable and youngest members of the community to prevent disease.

Are pertussis vaccines safe?

Yes, vaccines go through rigorous testing before approval and use.

Are pertussis vaccines effective?

Yes, since the introduction of the vaccine there has been a large decrease of pertussis related infections and deaths.

How long have pertussis vaccines been used?

Vaccines for pertussis have been in use for over 100 years.

Has there been pertussis in Ohio?

Yes, Ohio has seen cases of pertussis.

Vaccines are the best method to prevent vaccine preventable diseases, including pertussis, that you or your family might come in contact during your daily activities such as, traveling to trade shows, weddings, picking up supplies, and hosting families.

Talk to your trusted healthcare provider today about pertussis vaccines for your child and family.

Sources:

[CDC: About Whooping Cough](#)

[CDC: Symptoms of Whooping Cough](#)

[CDC: Whooping Cough Vaccination](#)