



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **TWO WHOOPING COUGH CASES REPORTED IN CHULA VISTA *Tdap Vaccine Urged for Children and Adults***

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) reports that a 7-year-old student at Feaster Charter School in Chula Vista has whooping cough (pertussis), a highly contagious disease that causes severe coughing. The student was immunized against the disease. A younger sibling who was too young to be fully immunized also has the disease.

"All of the students at the school had been immunized, which will help slow the spread of the disease," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "No vaccine is 100 percent effective, but we recommend vaccination for siblings and parents because the risks of whooping cough, especially to infants, are high. We urge parents to make sure their children are immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases. Teenagers and adults should get the Tdap booster, which provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus."

Feaster Charter School is working closely with HHSA and has notified parents through letters and phone calls about the possibility of classmates' exposure to whooping cough.

Named for the "whoop" sound victims may make during or after a severe coughing spell, whooping cough usually starts with flu-like symptoms, such as runny nose, sneezing, fever, and a mild cough. Symptoms can last up to two weeks and may be followed by severe coughing fits and vomiting. Whooping cough can occur at any age, but infants and young children are at highest risk of life threatening complications, such as pneumonia, brain damage, and death. Individuals with symptoms of whooping cough should call their health care provider.

The incubation period is commonly 7–10 days, with a range of 4–21 days. It is recommended that children get five doses of DTaP vaccine, one dose at 2 mo., 4 mo., 6 mo., 15-18 mo., and 4-6 years of age. It is also recommended that people 11- 64 years of age receive a single dose of Tdap vaccine, given in place of a "tetanus booster" (Td).

In 2007, there were 50 cases of whooping cough reported in the county. There have been 41 cases of whooping cough reported in San Diego County to date this year, including this case. For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (619) 692-8661, or visit the Web site at [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org).

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