



NEWS RELEASE

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THREE STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

Two seventh graders at Carmel Valley Middle School and an 11 year-old at Solana Pacific Elementary School have been diagnosed with pertussis or whooping cough, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is reporting today.

All three students were up to date with immunizations but were due for the booster shot.

"The CDC recommends that all children and adults 11 years or older receive an additional dose of vaccine to protect them against whooping cough," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer.

HHS is working closely with school staff at both schools to notify the parents of all students.

Named for the "whoop" sound children and adults sometimes make when they try to breathe in 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. These symptoms may be mild and brief, or last up to two weeks, but are often followed by severe coughing fits that may be associated with vomiting. Fever, if present, is usually mild. It is treatable with antibiotics.

Whooping cough can occur at any age, but infants and young children are at highest risk of life-threatening complications, the most common of which is pneumonia. In adolescents and adults, rib fractures and difficulty sleeping may occur. Anyone who is not immunized is at a higher risk for severe whooping cough.

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 one-time dose of Tdap, given in place of a "tetanus booster," which is administered every 10 years.

There have been 123 cases of whooping cough in San Diego County this year. In 2008, there were 51.

For more information about whooping cough, please call the HHS Immunization Branch at (619) 692-8661, or visit the web site at www.sdiz.org.

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