



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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FIVE AREA STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

Five area students have been diagnosed with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is reporting today. HHS is working closely with school staff to notify the parents of all students at the schools. The students are:

- A 6-year-old at Kelly Elementary School in Carlsbad Unified School District who was fully immunized;
- A 6-year-old at Benchley-Weinberger Elementary in the San Diego Unified School District who was missing one recommended dose;
- A 12-year-old at Marshall Middle School in the San Diego Unified School District who was due for a Tdap booster;
- A 16-year-old at Canyon Crest Academy in the San Dieguito School District who was fully immunized; and
- A 16-year-old at Scripps Ranch High School in the San Diego Unified School District who was fully immunized.

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.

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 137 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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