



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

December 23, 2009

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DEL MAR, SOLANA BEACH CHILDREN DIAGNOSED WITH WHOOPING COUGH

A 5-year-old at Carmel Creek Elementary School in the Solana Beach School District and a 10-year-old student at Ashley Falls Elementary School in the Del Mar Union School District have been diagnosed with pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is reporting today. Both students were up-to-date on their immunizations.

HHSA is working closely with school staff to notify the parents of all students who were potentially exposed at the schools, which are on winter break until January 4.

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 139 cases of whooping cough in San Diego County this year. In 2008, there were 51.

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.