

You are being provided with this fact sheet:

because you or your child may have been exposed to parapertussis. If you believe your child has developed parapertussis, contact your medical provider. Notify your child care provider or preschool immediately after the diagnosis has been made.

for informational purposes only.

What is parapertussis?

Parapertussis is similar to pertussis but tends to be a milder disease than pertussis. This illness is caused by the *Bordetella parapertussis* bacteria. Parapertussis is not reportable to Snohomish Health District. Anyone at any age can get parapertussis. There is no vaccine to prevent it.

What are the symptoms of parapertussis?

Parapertussis begins with a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly a low grade fever*. The cough may occur in sudden, uncontrollable bursts, sometimes ending with high-pitched whooping sounds and/or vomiting. If your child has been infected, it takes 6 to 21 days (usually 7 to 10 days) for symptoms to start.

How is parapertussis spread?

When a person with parapertussis coughs, tiny droplets with parapertussis bacteria fly into the air and another person breathes them in. A person can get parapertussis when he or she is directly coughed at or sneezed on by someone with parapertussis, or if he or she spends a lot of time close to a person who has parapertussis.

How is parapertussis diagnosed?

To confirm a diagnosis of parapertussis, laboratory tests are performed on material collected by placing a flexible swab through the nostril to the back of the nose and throat.

How is parapertussis treated?

Persons with parapertussis can be treated with antibiotics, but antibiotics may do little to lessen the symptoms. Treatment is most effective if started soon after cough begins. Preventive treatment is not generally recommended for contacts of people with parapertussis. However, preventive treatment may be considered for close contacts that are at a higher risk for more severe disease, including infants and immunocompromised persons or those who care for infants. These individuals should contact their health care provider for possible treatment.

* Fever is defined as: temperature above 100°F (37.8°C) under the arm or 101°F (38.3°C) orally.

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How is the spread of parapertussis reduced?

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough/sneeze into your sleeve/elbow. Dispose of used tissues. Wash hands.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent spread of communicable disease.
- Avoid close contact with others who are coughing or otherwise ill.
- Use antibiotics only as directed by a medical provider.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys (after each use) and objects and surfaces at least daily and when soiled.

Exclude from group setting?

Children with parapertussis do not need to be excluded from child care or school as long as they feel well enough to participate in routine activities.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/surv-manual/chpt10-pertussis.html>

Adapted from Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department (HSPHD) June 2008 and Minnesota Department of Health June 2009

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