
"To improve the health of our communities by identifying sustainable solutions to community health issues, developing partnerships for implementation of strategies, and demonstrating our success through measurement of outcomes."

To: Parents of Students 11-18 years, Teachers, and Staff
From: Communicable Disease Control Program, Central District Health Department
Subject: Risk of Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Increased. Get Vaccinated Now!
Date: April 30, 2009

There's a regional outbreak of pertussis (whooping cough) with cases in Boise, Eagle, Meridian, Mountain Home and Star.

- Over 70% (20) of the cases have been among high school students. (Rocky Mountain High School, Eagle High School, Borah High School, Timberline High School and Mountain Home High School)
- Not only is pertussis a very serious and long lasting cough illness, but also it's very expensive. A recently identified person with pertussis has been coughing for 10 weeks. That patient saw 4 doctors and went to an emergency department.

The majority of students, teachers, school staff and parents of students are not protected from pertussis even if they have been vaccinated!

- Most people assume that if they or their kids received pertussis vaccine as children, they will be immune (protected) for their life times. However, pertussis vaccine isn't perfect. A small percentage of fully-vaccinated children will have no protection right from the start.
- Immunity from pertussis vaccine weakens or disappears in 5 to 10 years. Almost everyone who received pertussis vaccine got their last shot when they were 4 to 6 years old. So, very few pre-teens, adolescents or adults have any protection.

Get a pertussis booster vaccination now!

- Doctors recommend a pertussis booster (Tdap vaccine—**T**etanus, **d**iphtheria and **a**cellular **p**ertussis) at age 11-12 years.
- 13-18 year-olds who missed the 11-12 year Tdap vaccination should get it now.
- A one-time dose of Tdap vaccine is recommended for adults under 65 years if it's been 10 or more years since their last tetanus shot.

Sources of information about Tdap vaccine:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/combo-vaccines/DTaP-Td-DT/Tdap.htm>
- Call your doctor.
- Call Central District Health Department's (CDHD's) Immunization Department and ask for a nurse (327-8615).

Where can people get vaccinated?

- Children who do not have medical providers—Call CDHD (327-7450) to make an appointment.
- All others—Call your medical provider.