



# NEWS



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CONTACT: Lisa Slater  
(309) 888-5489

## McLean County Experiencing a Small Pertussis Outbreak

BLOOMINGTON, IL- The McLean County Health Department is advising residents of a small outbreak of pertussis (whooping cough) involving both adults and children. Pertussis is not life-threatening to most healthy pre-teens, teens and adults. Infants and young children who have not been adequately vaccinated are at the highest risk for serious complications from pertussis.

Pertussis is a contagious, bacterial illness that is spread from person-to-person by droplet, direct contact with airborne respiratory secretions, or by direct contact with articles soiled by the infected person's nose and throat discharges. Symptoms can appear 5 to 21 days after infection and may at first appear like the common cold, but with an increasingly irritating, persistent cough. Those with pertussis are most contagious during the beginning, cold-like stage and the first 3 weeks after coughing begins, unless treated with an appropriate antibiotic.

In an effort to warn school officials of the signs and symptoms of pertussis and limit the spread of the disease, the McLean County Health Department is in the process of sending advisory letters to principals and school nurses of McLean County schools.

Most children receive an immunization against pertussis prior to entering daycare or school; however, immunity from the vaccine starts to decline starting 2-3 years after the last dose (kindergarten). Pre-teens, teenagers and adults are particularly susceptible if they have not received a booster shot. Parents should contact their children's healthcare providers to see if their child needs either the Tdap or DTaP booster shots. It is also recommended that pregnant women receive the Tdap booster with every pregnancy, during the third trimester.

The McLean County Health Department has both Tdap and DTaP vaccinations available to County residents through the Immunization Clinic. Appointments can be made to get either of the booster shots by calling, 309-888-5455 Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m..

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