

Whooping Cough

Be Aware. Treat It Early.

What Is Whooping Cough?

- Whooping cough disease (also called pertussis) causes coughing fits that make it hard to breathe.
- It spreads easily when someone with the disease coughs or sneezes.
- It can kill young babies.

Whooping Cough Signs and Symptoms

Early Symptoms

Often, symptoms start mild and are like a common cold:

- runny nose
- sneezing
- low or no fever
- mild cough

Symptoms After 1-2 Weeks

Symptoms can get worse fast and can last for months. They include bad coughing attacks that may lead to:

- vomiting
- a red or blue face
- a “whoop” sound
- problems breathing
- extreme tiredness
- sweating spells

Symptoms in Infants Are Different

Infants younger than 6 months old often do not have a typical cough. In the early stages, infants may:

- gasp or gag
- stop breathing
- get very tired
- have seizures

Symptoms can get worse very fast. Often, babies need to go to the hospital for care.

Treat Whooping Cough Early

Call Your Doctor If You or a Family Member:

- Are around someone who has whooping cough or a bad cough
- Have any symptoms of whooping cough

Your Doctor May Prescribe an Antibiotic Medicine

Early treatment with antibiotic medicine can:

- Keep you from getting sicker
- Prevent you from spreading the disease to others
- Be given to infants and other household members to prevent them from getting sick

If You Have Whooping Cough:

- Stay home. Avoid contact with others until you have finished treatment.
- If you are caring for an infant, have an adult who is not sick, feed, hold, and care for your baby.

Whooping Cough Shots Prevent the Disease

- Everyone needs to be up-to-date on their whooping cough shots (DTaP for kids younger than 7 years; or Tdap for older ages).
- Newborn babies are too young for the shots.
- Immunity from the disease or the shots wears off, so people 11 years and older need a booster shot.



Know the Symptoms. Call Your Doctor.

www.getimmunizedca.org

For local information contact:
Santa Clara County Public Health Department
Website: www.sccphd.org Call Line: 408.885.3980



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