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: 408.285.3200

San José State University
Wellness & Health Promotion

California Department of Public Health - Immunization Branch