



## Shawano-Menominee Counties Health Department

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### **PERTUSSIS IMPACTING NORTHEAST WISCONSIN** Protect Yourself from Pertussis Circulating in Our Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHAWANO AND MENOMINEE COUNTIES, Wis. — The Shawano-Menominee Counties Health Department would like to make the public aware that there are cases of pertussis (whooping cough) circulating in our neighboring counties.

Pertussis is caused by a bacteria and easily spreads from person to person through contact with droplets of saliva expelled by an infected person when they talk, cough, or sneeze, etc. Initially symptoms may be similar to the common cold: runny nose, sneezing, low-grade fever, and mild occasional cough. Individuals can further develop uncontrollable, violent coughing that makes it hard to breathe. After coughing, someone with pertussis may need to take deep breaths causing a “whooping” sound. Infected people can spread pertussis up to three weeks after the cough begins if they are not treated with the appropriate antibiotics.

Pertussis can affect people of all ages. However, it can be very serious, even deadly, for babies less than 1 year old. Many babies who get pertussis are infected by older siblings, parents, or caregivers who might not even know they have the disease.

Please see your primary care provider for testing and treatment if you are experiencing symptoms or have been around someone you suspect may have pertussis. Due to there also being other respiratory illnesses going around, as well as people experiencing allergy symptoms due to high pollen, testing is the only way to know for sure if you or a loved one has pertussis.

**It is imperative for patients to stay home and isolate while awaiting test results to prevent potential spread.** Also, be mindful of keeping distance from others in the household while you are waiting for results, especially those at higher risk for such as babies less than 1 year old, those who are pregnant, and individuals with compromised immune systems.

#### Additional information and Links:

If you have concerns or think you may have been exposed, contact your primary care provider immediately to discuss next steps. Additionally, it is recommended that close contacts to that are high risk notify their provider of the exposure, as they may be a candidate for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

**The best way to prevent pertussis among babies, teens, and adults is to get vaccinated.** To check if you and your loved ones are up to date on your vaccinations that protect against pertussis, please contact your provider or check the Wisconsin Immunization Registry:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/wir.htm>

(MORE)

Resources:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00688.pdf>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/pertussis.htm>

[https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/pertussis/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fpertussis%2Fvaccines.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/pertussis/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fpertussis%2Fvaccines.html)

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