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From: Dr. Candy Stockton, Health Officer	Phone #: (707) 268-2182
Subject: Respiratory Illness Awareness in Humboldt County	Fax: (707) 445-7346

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Attention: Office Manager: Please distribute copies to all your practitioners.

Respiratory Surveillance: High levels of Pertussis and Influenza A circulating in Humboldt County

Pertussis/Whooping Cough:

- In Humboldt County, 30 cases of Pertussis were reported from November 2024 to February 4th, 2025. Ten Pertussis cases were reported in 2024 in Humboldt County, and only one case in 2023. Cases ranged in age from 3-70 years old, with most occurring in children under 16 years of age. Three cases have been associated with an elementary school in Arcata, families at this location have been notified of exposure.
- The CDC and AAP currently recommend PEP for all household contacts, regardless of age or immunization status, because secondary attack rates in households are high even among vaccinated persons.
- Recommend reviewing vaccination status and updating vaccinations as indicated for those who have not been vaccinated, are partially immunized, pregnant individuals, and adults who have never received a booster dose.

Influenza A

- For the last 10 days, we have seen more than 20-30 cases of influenza per day reported by local hospitals, which does not capture all cases.
- It's not too late to offer/give influenza vaccines for those who have not received them yet this winter.
- For outpatient medical providers, please make sure your staff are not directing patients who call with influenza to come in and set in the waiting room (we've received multiple reports of this happening). Have a protocol in place to handle requests for antivirals in a timely fashion, treatment should be treated for high-risk individuals within 48 hours of symptom onset.

Pertussis Diagnosis and Testing

- Clinical case definition of Pertussis: In the absence of a more likely diagnosis, a cough illness lasting ≥ 2 weeks, with at least one of the following signs or symptoms:
 - ♣ Paroxysms of coughing; OR ♣ Inspiratory whoop; OR ♣ Post-tussive vomiting; OR ♣ Apnea (with or without cyanosis)
- Consider pertussis regardless of age in patients with persistent cough. Symptoms are generally milder in teens and adults, especially in those who have received Tdap.
- Please test siblings of patients suspected of Pertussis and encourage family members within households to get tested.
- Consider pertussis even in recently vaccinated people when evaluating patients with symptoms compatible with pertussis. Immunity after immunization wanes within a few years.

DHHS Administration
 phone: (707) 441-5400
 fax: (707) 441-5412

Behavioral Health
 phone: (707) 268-2990
 fax: (707) 476-4049

Social Services
 phone: (707) 476-4700
 fax: (707) 441-2096



Treatment and Postexposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

- Initiate antibiotic treatment prior to obtaining test results, especially in infants and pregnant women or those who are in close contact with them. Azithromycin is preferred because of efficacy and compliance.
- CDC and AAP currently recommend PEP for all household contacts, regardless of age or immunization status, because secondary attack rates in households are high even among vaccinated persons.
- Provide antibiotic prophylaxis to household contacts, caregivers, and other persons who have had direct contact with respiratory, oral, or nasal secretions and aerosols from a symptomatic case, especially when there is an infant or pregnant woman in the home. The dosage and duration for antibiotic prophylaxis is the same as treatment and should not be shortened.

Prevention

- Instruct patients with pertussis to stay home from school or daycare until they have received 5 days of antibiotics and to avoid contact with infants and pregnant women.
- Encourage patients and families to stay up to date on Pertussis vaccinations this is especially important for pregnant individuals, infants under 1 years of age, caregivers and household members of infants and attendees and workers in childcare.

Additional Information

- To help us with the disease investigation, please inform your patients that they may be contacted by someone from Humboldt County Public Health Communicable Disease Program for an interview.

Resources

- Center for Disease Control (CDC): (SOME PAGES MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AT THIS TIME)
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/index.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/php/surveillance/index.html>
 - <https://wonder.cdc.gov/nndss/static/2024/41/2024-41-table990.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/php/surveillance/index.html>
- Humboldt County Public Health Nursing Division:
 - <https://humboldt.gov/2237/Provider-Communication-from-Public-Health>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH):
 - [CDPH Pertussis \(Whooping Cough\)](#)
 - [CDPH Pertussis Quicksheet for LHJs - January 2025](#)
 - [CDPH Influenza, Covid-19 and Respiratory Illness Outbreak Quicksheet for Non-Healthcare Settings](#)
 - [CDC Influenza Guidance](#)

