



## Orchard Farm R-V School District

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

We have a case of Pertussis reported in Orchard Farm Middle school. Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that is spread through the air by cough. Pertussis begins with cold symptoms and a cough that becomes much worse over 1-2 weeks. Symptoms usually include a long series of coughs ("coughing fits") followed by a whooping noise. However, older children, adults and very young infants may not develop the whoop. There is generally no fever. People with pertussis may have a series of coughs followed by vomiting, turning blue, or difficulty catching breath. The cough is often worse at night and cough medicines usually do not help the cough. The incubation period for Pertussis is 6-21 days after exposure.

Please consider the following health department recommendations:

1. Infants under one year, and particularly under six months, are most likely to experience severe illness if they develop Pertussis. When possible, young infants should be kept away from people with a cough. **A doctor should promptly evaluate infants with any coughing illness.**
2. If you have children who have not been completely immunized against Pertussis (particularly infants under one year of age), we recommend you talk to your child's doctor about vaccination. There are new booster vaccinations available for persons 10-64 years of age.
3. If your child comes down with cold symptoms that include a cough, talk to your child's doctor without delay. Tell him/her that there has been pertussis identified in your child's school. Giving antibiotics early can help your child get well faster and lower the chances of spreading the disease to others.
4. **Any child who is a close contact to a child with Pertussis and has a suspicious cough will be sent home by the school nurse and not allowed to return to school until they have been on antibiotics for 5 days, a negative Pertussis test result is on file or if untreated, 21 days after onset of symptoms.**

If you have any questions, please call your physician. Thank you.

Sincerely,

School Nurse

