

PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

We would like to inform you that a case of Pertussis or whooping cough has occurred in the Pine Plains Central School District. If your child has been around someone with Pertussis, they may become sick with Pertussis as well. This is especially true when the child has not received all the Pertussis vaccine shots. Sometimes even if a child's shots are up to date, they may still get Pertussis.

The incubation period for Pertussis is 7 – 21 days. Persons are infectious for only the first 3 weeks following the onset of cough. **Preventive antibiotics for persons exposed should be offered to close contacts such as household contacts. We are informing you of this potential exposure so that if your child has developed a persistent cough, especially if they have difficulty catching their breath or vomit directly after a coughing fit you should have them evaluated by their pediatrician.** Giving antibiotics early can help your child get well faster and lower the chances of spreading the disease to others. It is common for cough to persist from weeks to months after onset with or without antibiotics. If your child has a persistent cough, please do not return your ill child to the camp setting until he/she has been evaluated. If your child is diagnosed with Pertussis they must be on antibiotics for 5 days before returning to any group setting.

Facts about Pertussis:

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 only a slight 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 alleviate the cough. A fact sheet with additional information will be provided to you by the day care staff

Please consider the following Department of Health recommendations:

1. Infants under one year old, especially those under six months, are most likely to have severe symptoms if they develop Pertussis. When possible, young infants should be kept away from people with a cough. **Infants with any coughing illness should be seen promptly by their doctor.**
2. Pertussis is prevalent in our community. A Pertussis vaccine called Tdap is now available for persons 7 years of age or older. We recommend that you talk to your doctor about the benefits of vaccination for you and your child.
3. If your child comes down with cold symptoms, including a cough, talk to your child’s health care provider. Tell the doctor that pertussis has been seen in your child's day care setting.

If you have further concerns or questions, you should contact your doctor, or the Dutchess County Department of Health at: 845-486-3402.

Thank you.