

MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT NETWORK SYSTEM



*Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)
(Formerly Bureau of Health)
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Phone 1-800-821-5821 / Fax 207-287-7443*

****ADVISORY – Important Information****

2006PHADV004

TO: Border Medical Officers, Emergency Dept.'s, EMS, Hospital Assoc., Hospital Educators, Infection Control Practitioner's, ME Correctional Facilities, ME Lab Facilities, ME Primary Care, MEMA, Public Health Nursing, Public Health, RRC's, School Nurses, State and Federal Agencies

FROM: Dora Anne Mills, M.D., M.P.H., Public Health Director

SUBJECT: Pertussis in Maine

DATE: March 7, 2006

TIME: 5:00 PM

PAGES: 2

PRIORITY: Review

Confidentiality Notice: This fax message is intended for the exclusive use of the individual or entity identified above. It may contain information, which is privileged and/or confidential under both state and federal law. If you are not notified otherwise, any further dissemination, copying, or disclosure of the communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this transmittal in error, please immediately notify us at 287-3252 and return the original transmission to us by mail at Key Bank Plaza, 6th Floor-286 Water Street. Augusta, ME 04333, without making a copy. Your cooperation in protecting confidential information is greatly appreciated.

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)
(Formerly Bureau of Health)

Pertussis in Maine

Maine has seen significant increases in the incidence of pertussis (whooping cough) in recent years. Ten cases were recently reported from Hancock County. This advisory provides recommendations for the evaluation and management of pertussis.

1. Consider pertussis when evaluating any patient with an acute illness characterized by cough >2 weeks in duration, or cough with paroxysms, whoop, or post-tussive vomiting. Infants may present with apnea and/or cyanosis.
2. Report known or suspected cases promptly to the Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.
3. Persons who exhibit symptoms consistent with pertussis should be tested for pertussis with a nasopharyngeal swab. The state Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) tests specimens by culture and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) in addition to other reference labs in the state. Serologic testing through private laboratories has not been well standardized and should not be used.
4. Individuals with suspected pertussis should be treated after a nasopharyngeal specimen is collected for testing. Antibiotic treatment for pertussis cases and contacts has recently been updated by the federal CDC in the MMWR (December 9, 2005. RR-14). The guidelines are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5414a1.htm>
5. Individuals with symptoms of pertussis should be considered to be infectious and should not attend school, work, or daycare until they have completed 5 days of an appropriate antibiotic. This is especially important for persons working in medical settings or with infants and young children.
6. Children under age 7 should be up-to-date for pertussis immunization. The two new pertussis-containing vaccines for adolescents and adults are not yet available through the state immunization program.
7. For more information on pertussis control measures, please go to www.cdc.gov/nip/publications/pertussis/guide.htm, or call the Maine Immunization Program at (207) 287-3746 or (800) 867-4775.