

# Pertussis

(Also known as: Whooping Cough or the 100 Day cough)

Pertussis can be a serious bacterial illness especially in young, unvaccinated children.

## If you think your child has Pertussis:

\*Call your Doctor and call your school.

## When to stay home:

\*If your child is suspected to have Whooping Cough they need to stay home until 5 days after your child starts taking antibiotics.

\*If not treated with antibiotics, they need to stay home until 21 days (three weeks) after cough starts.

## SYMPTOMS

\*Your child may first have a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly fever.

\*After 1 or 2 weeks, your child may cough in explosive bursts. These coughing attacks can end in vomiting and/or in a high-pitched whoop (may sound like a seal bark). Coughing attacks occur most often (not always) at night. This may last up to three months.

\*If your child has been infected, it may take 4 to 21 days (usually 7 to 10) for symptoms to start.

## SPREAD

\*By coughing or sneezing.

## CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

\*From the time of the first cold-like symptoms until 21 days after coughing began. Antibiotics shorten contagious period.

## CALL YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER...

\*If someone in your home has:

- had a cough 7 or more days.
- been exposed to pertussis.

## PREVENTION

- Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing. Use a tissue or your sleeve.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with hand washing.
- In Minnesota, all children 2 months of age or older enrolled in school must be vaccinated against pertussis or have a legal exemption. **There is also a pertussis vaccine for adolescents and adults**, especially those who have close contact with children under one year of age.