

# Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

## What is Pertussis?

Pertussis/Whooping cough is a bacterial infection that causes severe coughing that lasts for weeks. It can lead to pneumonia, convulsions, brain damage, and even death. Infants six months of age and younger are at greatest risk for these serious complications.

## Immunization in Pregnancy

Immunizing women at or after 26 weeks of pregnancy is safe, and increases protection for newborn infants by minimizing risk of infection in those around them and giving them antibodies transferred during pregnancy. Pertussis can be treated, most successfully if caught early; however, immunization can safely prevent disease and, if it does occur, reduce symptoms and spread of the disease.

### For more information:

Visit:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca>  
<http://immunizealberta.ca/i-need-know-more/commonquestions/whooping-cough>

Call:

Wetaskiwin Health Unit 780-361-4333  
Maskwacis Health Services 780-585-3830

Source: Alberta Health Services

## Why?

Due to an increase in the number of cases of whooping cough (pertussis) confirmed in the Central Zone of Alberta, AHS is offering additional immunization opportunities for at-risk individuals.

## What to do if you think you have Pertussis

Anyone who thinks they or a family member may be sick with pertussis should stay at home and call your family doctor or **Health Link Alberta toll-free:**

**1-866-408-LINK (5465).**

When prescribed treatment, cases should stay home from work, school or childcare until 5 days of antibiotics are finished. If no treatment taken then wait 21 days after start of symptoms.

## Prevention

When someone with whooping cough sneezes, coughs, or laughs, tiny drops of fluid holding the bacteria are put into the air. The bacteria infects others when they breathe in the droplets or get them on their hands and touch their mouth or nose. Symptoms appear 7-14 days later.

- Immunize
- Wash Hands often
- Stay away from those with a bad cough.

## Who is at risk?

AHS has proactively increased the number of immunization appointments available in Central Zone to reduce infant infection rates. Specifically intended for residents:

- Infants and pre-school aged children who are not up-to-date on immunizations.
- Caregivers and close contacts of infants such as parents, grandparents, nannies, child care staff.
- Health care workers.
- **Pregnant women** who are at least, or greater than, **26 weeks** pregnant.



**Wetaskiwin PCN**

5510c- 48Street Wetaskiwin

**QUESTIONS? CALL:**

Ph 780.312.2500

Source: MayoClinic.Com