



# Southwest District Health

13307 Miami Lane ♦ Caldwell, Idaho 83607 ♦ (208) 455-5442 ♦ FAX (208) 455-5350

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Emmett, ID  
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208/365-6371*

*1177 S. FAYETTE  
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83661  
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*1011 S. WEISER  
Weiser, ID  
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*Street  
Homedale ID  
83628  
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September 4, 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child may have been exposed to pertussis (whooping cough) at Wilder High school. Pertussis is a respiratory illness that is easily spread person-to-person through the air by coughing and sneezing. Once infected it may take 7 to 21 days to develop symptoms.

### Recommendations:

1. If your child has a cough, keep them at home and call your doctor.
  - Other symptoms of pertussis can include:
    - ✓ Coughing fits,
    - ✓ Coughing fits which may or may not be followed by a “whooping sound” as the person catches their breath,
    - ✓ Vomiting after coughing, or
    - ✓ Shortness of breath.
  - Keep your child home from school, day care and activities, such as sports or play groups, even if they do not have a fever. See below for when your child can return to these activities.
  - Make an appointment with your child’s doctor as soon as possible and tell the doctor that your child may have been exposed to pertussis. Show them the reverse side of this letter.
2. If your child has been diagnosed with pertussis by his or her doctor:
  - Tell the school or day care that your child has been diagnosed with pertussis.
  - School officials and day care providers may request that you keep your child home until your child has been on antibiotics for five days to treat pertussis.
  - Ask your child’s doctor for a note that states your child has pertussis.

The best way to prevent pertussis is to be vaccinated. Check with your doctor to make sure your family is up-to-date on their shots. Protection against pertussis from the childhood vaccine, DTaP, decreases over time. Older children and adults should get a pertussis booster shot called “Tdap” to protect themselves and infants near or around them. Pregnant women should receive Tdap in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of each pregnancy. If you need shots, contact your doctor or Southwest District Health at (208) 455-5345.

### What if I have additional questions about pertussis?

- Call your doctor,
- Call Southwest District Health Communicable Disease Program at (208) 455-5442, or
- Visit the Center for Disease Control’s Pertussis website at <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/>



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Dear Healthcare Provider:

This patient may have been exposed to pertussis as part of an ongoing pertussis outbreak in Canyon County, Idaho. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends healthcare providers consider the following to evaluate, test, and treat exposed patients who have respiratory symptoms.

### **For patients coughing <21 days:**

1. Collect a nasopharyngeal swab for pertussis PCR testing.
2. Do not delay treatment by waiting for laboratory results if clinical history is suggestive of pertussis or the patient is at risk for severe disease (e.g. infants).
3. The patient cannot attend school, day care or activities, such as sports or play groups, until they have been on five days of appropriate antimicrobial treatment for pertussis.
  - Updated pertussis antimicrobial treatment recommendations and regimens can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/clinical/treatment.html> or in the 2015 Red Book.
4. Prescribe pertussis antimicrobial postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) for all household members or coordinate PEP through Southwest District Health.
  - Detailed pertussis PEP recommendations can be found on the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/outbreaks/pep.html>.
  - Updated antimicrobial regimens for pertussis PEP are detailed in the CDC pertussis treatment recommendations at <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/clinical/treatment.html> and 2015 Red Book.
5. Report suspect cases to Southwest District Health at (208) 455-5442.

### **For patients coughing ≥21 days:**

1. Diagnostic testing for pertussis by PCR after a patient has been coughing for 4 weeks is not beneficial. After the fourth week of cough, the amount of bacterial DNA rapidly diminishes, which increases the risk of obtaining falsely-negative results. There is some evidence that pertussis serology may be useful for diagnosis in the later phases of pertussis, but commercial serologic testing is not FDA approved and can be difficult to interpret.
2. After 21 days of coughing, the patient is no longer contagious and treatment will not likely alter the course of illness. However, those at risk for severe disease (e.g. infants and pregnant women) may clinically benefit from pertussis antimicrobial treatment given within 6 weeks of cough onset.
3. The patient is no longer infectious and can return to school and other activities.
4. Report suspect pertussis cases to Southwest District Health at (208) 455-5442.

**For all households:** Administer Tdap vaccine to contacts 11 years and older who have not been previously vaccinated with Tdap, or refer for vaccination to Southwest District Health. Advise all pregnant females to get a Tdap during the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of each pregnancy.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please call Southwest District Health Communicable Disease Program at (208) 455-5442.