

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

What is Whooping Cough?

Pertussis is a highly contagious bacterial infection that leads to a long-lasting cough. It is caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis*. It is commonly referred to as “whooping cough” or the “100 day cough”

Pertussis is a reportable disease in Kansas

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms can appear from 6-21 days after exposure and usually appear within 7-10 days, and include:

- Cold-like symptoms
- Coughing fits
- Whooping sounds
- Unable to catch breath during coughing episode
- Vomiting (rare)
- Apnea (failure to breath) – sometimes seen in infants

Symptoms can last 6-10 weeks

The contagious period for someone who has pertussis is approximately 3 weeks after cough begins

You can get pertussis more than once.

If you have symptoms, call your healthcare provider

Transmission (How it spreads)

- Person-to-person when infected people cough, sneeze or talk

Diagnosis and Treatment

Nasopharyngeal swab for testing

Antibiotics for those infected and close contacts

Prevention:

- Vaccination
- Persons with pertussis should stay away from others, especially high risk groups
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Good hand hygiene

Who is at Risk?

Everyone; higher risk groups include:

- Infants and young children
- Those who have not been vaccinated

If you have symptoms, call your healthcare provider

Report cases to the Riley County Health Department by calling the Disease Investigation
Line: 785-317-0474

Pertussis is a reportable disease in the state of Kansas. All cases must be reported to
KDHE via the Epi Hotline: 877-427-7317