



ONONDAGA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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Update on Pertussis

- Small outbreaks of pertussis have been identified in several middle schools in Onondaga County since November 2011
- Bordetella PCR test is only helpful in symptomatic cases
- Tdap is recommended for children 11-12 and is required for children enrolling in grades 6-10 in New York State
- A one time Tdap vaccine is recommended for all adults aged less than 65 years

Dear Colleagues:

We have received reports of several cases of probable or confirmed pertussis in Onondaga County since November 2011. Most cases involve middle school students from five school districts.

As you know, despite the high rate of pertussis vaccination in school age youth, communities across the country are still experiencing significant levels of pertussis activity. I would like to work together with the medical community to ensure that the two-pronged strategy to decrease the prevalence of pertussis in Onondaga County is widely implemented:

- **Timely diagnosis of pertussis by bordetella PCR in a symptomatic individual and school/work exclusion until treatment is complete:**
 - Please help us curtail pertussis by testing symptomatic patients, by excluding patients suspected of having pertussis from school or work until treatment is complete, and by reporting cases to the Onondaga County Health Department. Please note that PCR should not be ordered for asymptomatic individuals.
- **Widespread use of Tdap vaccine in indicated populations as recommended by ACIP*:** One dose of Tdap (Boostrix approved for ages 10 and over, and Adacel approved for ages 11 and over) is recommended for
 - any child aged 7 to 10 years who is not fully immunized against pertussis
 - all adolescents 11-18 years of age
 - all adults (one time, in place of Td as a booster for tetanus)
 - pregnant women after 20 weeks of pregnancy in addition to cocooning Tdap vaccination

Pertussis still poses a significant threat to young infants and immunocompromised children, but our joint efforts in identifying confirmed cases for treatment, providing prophylaxis to close contacts of cases, and administration of Tdap as indicated will help mitigate the impact pertussis has on our community.

Thank you and have a Happy and Healthy New Year!
Sincerely,

Cynthia B. Morrow, MD, MPH
Commissioner of Health, Onondaga County