Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

Whooping Cough (Pertussis) **10/5/2024**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

A case of whooping cough has been confirmed in a child from Edmund Rice College

- *Whooping cough can be a very serious illness for babies.*
- *You can still get whooping cough even if you are vaccinated.*
- *Please take this letter to your doctor if your child or other family members are coughing.*

It is important to look out for these symptoms in you or your child over the next 3 weeks:

-Dry cough -Sore throat -Runny nose

-Cough often worse at night and comes in bouts, may include vomiting

Note: the "whoop" sound is often not heard in older children and adults.

What should people do if they are coughing?
If you or your child are coughing or start coughing, please see your doctor. **This is extremely important if there is a baby less than 6 months of age living in your household.** Anyone who is being tested for whooping cough should remain at home until the results are available.

Whooping cough can be a very serious illness for small children, especially babies under twelve months old.

How is it tested?
Whooping cough is tested by a throat or nose swab.

How is it treated?
Whooping cough is a respiratory illness which is treated with a course of antibiotics. To prevent the spread to others, anyone with whooping cough should remain at home until they have had the first five days of antibiotics.

How is it prevented?
Vaccination is the best prevention for whooping cough. However, the vaccination for whooping cough is not 100% effective and you can still get whooping cough even if you are vaccinated. NSW Health recommends an adult booster vaccine every 10 years to protect from Diphtheria, Tetanus and Whooping Cough (Pertussis).

For further information please see the included Whooping Cough (Pertussis) Factsheet or contact the Public Health Unit Infectious Diseases Team on 02 4221 6700.

Kind regards,

Curtis Gregory

Director

Illawarra Shoalhaven Public Health Unit

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