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The whooping cough, also known as pertussis, is on the rise. As of June 15th, disease activity in 2011 is still at relatively increased levels throughout the state

Pertussis is a highly contagious bacterial disease that spreads via tiny droplets into the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs. In many cases the symptoms are relatively mild, similar to those of a common cold. However, sometimes they can quickly worsen and develop into a deep violent, hacking cough, followed by a characteristic whoop - the sound the sufferer makes when gasping for air.

The California Department of Public Health is urging that everyone in contact with infants and young children less than 12 months old, especially recent mothers and fathers, be vaccinated for pertussis.

The vaccination is known as tetanus toxoid-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap). It is ordinarily given as a single dose booster to persons 11 years of age and older. The California Department of Public Health also recommends that children aged seven to nine who have not yet received all of their routine shots receive a Tdap dose. Pertussis vaccinations are taken once in a lifetime. Tdap vaccinations can be substituted for the traditional booster ten year tetanus shot.

For more information contact the [California Department of Public Health](#) .

For the 2011-2012 school year, all students entering into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades will need proof of a Tdap shot for school. For 2012-2013 and future school years, all students entering into 7th grade will need proof of a Tdap shot for school.

- The New Whooping Cough Epidemic. (2010, August 8). Parade, 16.
- State health officials calling for whooping cough vaccinations. (2010, July 19).
- Pertussis Vaccination Recommendations 2010. CDPH, Immunization Branch (2010, July).

