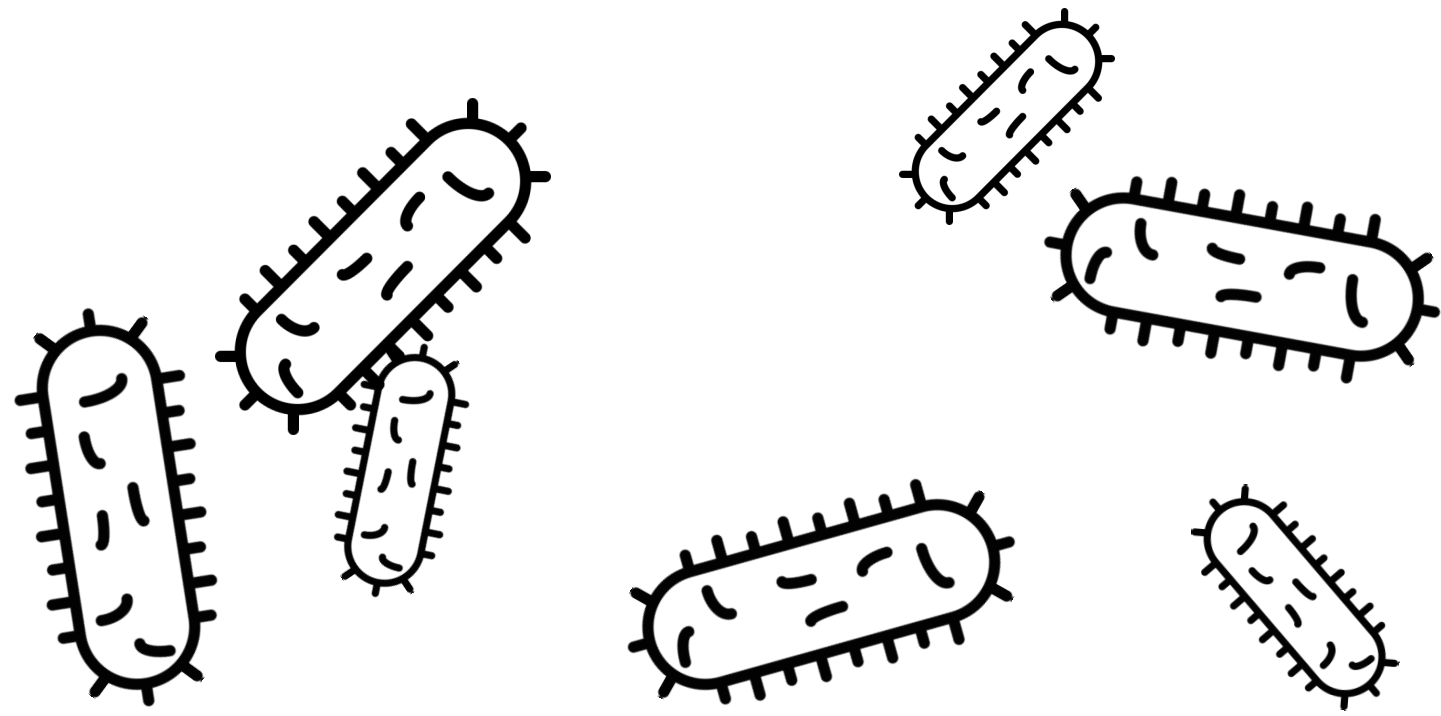
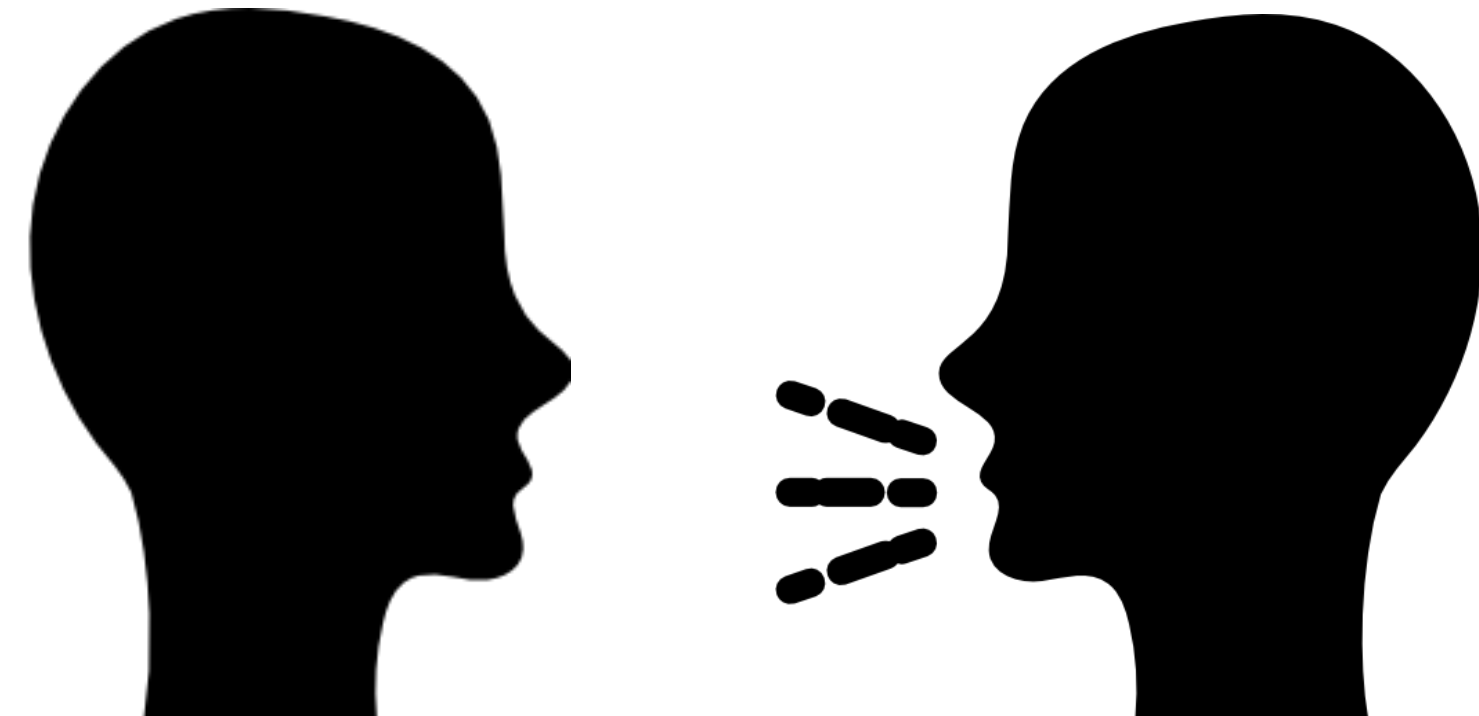


# Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Fact Sheet



Pertussis, or whooping cough, is caused by bacteria. People of all ages can get pertussis.



Pertussis spreads from person-to-person through the air, usually by coughing or sneezing. A person has to breathe in droplets from an infected person to get sick.

## Signs and Symptoms



Runny Nose



Cough, Starting Mild and Worsening Over Time

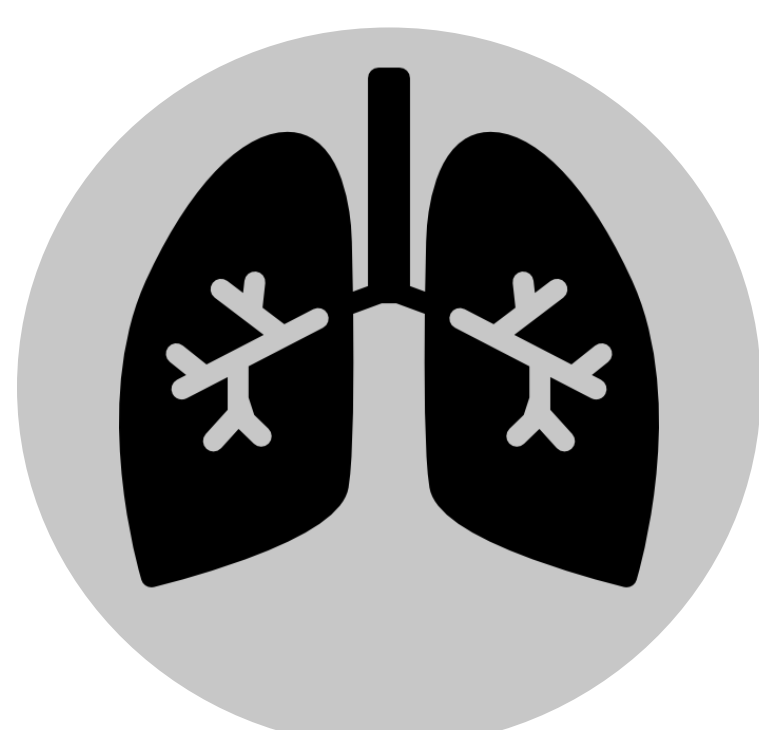


Vomiting or Gagging After Coughing

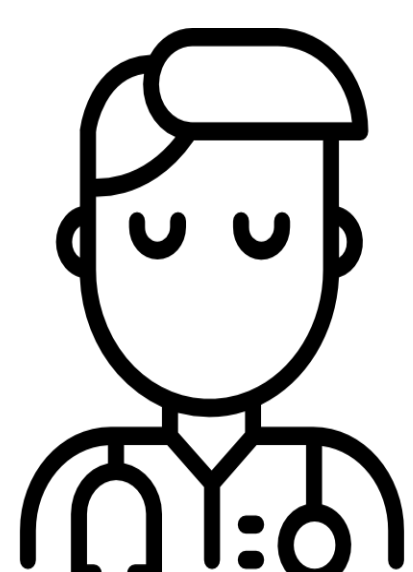


Exhaustion, or Feeling Very Tired

The first signs of pertussis are similar to a common cold and include sneezing, runny nose, low or no fever, and a mild cough. After one or two weeks of illness, the cough gets worse. The cough is often sudden and uncontrollable where one cough follows the next without a break or breath, especially at night. A high-pitched whooping sound when breathing in after a coughing episode can occur. Whooping is less common in infants and vaccinated people. Other symptoms can include vomiting or gagging after coughing and feeling very tired because of coughing. Coughing spells become less frequent over time but may continue for weeks to months.



Pertussis can be very serious, especially in infants. The most common complication of pertussis is pneumonia. Seizures, swelling of the brain, and death are rare but possible.



Talk to your healthcare provider if you think you have pertussis. A doctor may swab your nose to test for pertussis.

# Pertussis Treatment



Pertussis can be treated with antibiotics and is most effective if started early. Cough may continue for many weeks after treatment, especially if treatment is started late in the illness. Antibiotics are not recommended if a person has already been coughing for 21 days or more.

Pertussis can spread from an infected person to others until five days of antibiotics are completed. If you do not take antibiotics, you will need to stay away from others for 21 days after coughing begins. This includes staying home from daycare, school, work, or events.

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## Pertussis Vaccine



Vaccination is the best way to prevent pertussis. The childhood vaccine is called DTaP and the pertussis booster for adolescents and adults is called Tdap. U.S. CDC also recommends pregnant women receive a Tdap vaccine during each pregnancy. Talk to your healthcare provider to make sure you are up-to-date.

People vaccinated for pertussis can still get sick, but it is usually a milder illness. Vaccinated people are less likely to be hospitalized or die from pertussis.

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## Other Prevention



Wash Your Hands Often



Cover Coughs With a Tissue or Your Sleeve



Stay Home When Sick

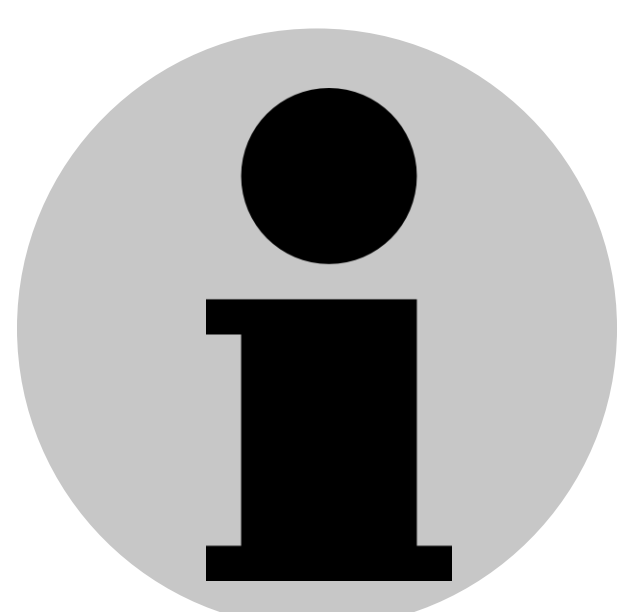


Avoid Close Contact With Sick People

Routine cleaners and disinfectants should be used to remove these bacteria from surfaces or objects. See your healthcare provider if you have signs of pertussis or were in close contact with someone with pertussis.

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## For More Information, Visit:



1. [www.maine.gov/dhhs/pertussis](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/pertussis)
2. [www.cdc.gov/pertussis](http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis)

You can also call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.