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RSU 57 prepares respectful, responsible and creative thinkers for success in the global community.

August 28, 2019

To: Parents, Guardians & Staff

Subject: Exposure to Pertussis

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) was recently notified of a case of pertussis, also known as (whooping cough), in RSU #57.

Pertussis is an illness that is spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Pertussis usually begins with symptoms of a common cold (sore throat, and runny nose) and often develops into a severe cough. The cough can last for several weeks or more. It can take up to 21 days after exposure to become sick. Most children are vaccinated against pertussis, but it is still possible for vaccinated people to become ill. Babies are most at risk of serious illness.

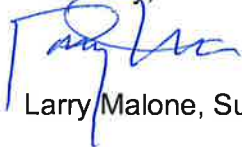
Individuals who are not symptomatic (ie. not coughing) do not need to be excluded from activities and do not need to be tested. Antibiotics are not routinely recommended for casual contacts of pertussis cases, but may be recommended to household members. Household members of confirmed cases do not need to stay home while on antibiotics unless they have cold and cough symptoms.

To prevent the spread of pertussis in your community, we are making the following recommendations:

- If your child has or gets a severe cough (may include coughing to the point of gagging, vomiting after coughing or difficulty breathing) or a prolonged cough lasting 2 weeks or longer, please contact your health care provider to be tested for pertussis.
- Children and adults with a severe cough, prolonged cough or confirmed pertussis should be started on antibiotics and will need to **remain at home for 5 days** while taking these antibiotics.
- Please check with your medical provider to be sure you and your child are up-to-date on pertussis vaccine. Most children have had the DTaP vaccine series before the age 7 years, but immunity wanes over time. A booster dose of Tdap is now required for 7th grade entry and all children 11-18 years should have had one dose of Tdap. A single Tdap shot is also recommended for adults, especially adults who have contact with infants and young children. A Tdap booster is recommended with every pregnancy.

If you have further questions, please contact the Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Larry Malone, Superintendent