When a Cough is More than Just a Cough

Whooping cough, also known as pertussis, is a contagious respiratory disease marked by a high-pitched sounding cough. Patients with pertussis who cough within the first three weeks of the disease are highly infectious to others in their immediate vicinity.

The disease often seems like an ordinary cold at first but can be very serious, particularly for infants. Whooping cough can cause babies to cough so much that they cannot breath. Most infants under one year of age who become infected with the disease must be hospitalized, 1 in 5 gets pneumonia, and for 1 in 100 infants, it can even be deadly.

It can also cause severe fits of coughing in adults and teens that can lead to vomiting, pulled muscles, broken ribs, pneumonia, and hospitalization. Worse yet, they can spread it to infants.

Get Your Tdap Booster

Everyone in the family should be immunized against whooping cough to protect themselves and the baby at home. Parents should ask their doctor for the Tdap vaccine that includes a tetanus and diphtheria booster and also protects against whooping cough.

Make Sure Your Children are Up-To-Date on Their Immunizations

Children 10 years of age and older can also get the new Tdap booster. Infants and toddlers need four shots against whooping cough and a booster before starting kindergarten.

Cover Your Cough and Wash your Hands

Whooping cough is spread by coughing. Remind everyone to cover their mouths and wash their hands often.

For more information call:
HealthFinder at 504-456-5000
or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 1-877-554-4625