

# PARAPERTUSSIS

Consult the health department before posting/distributing Parent/Guardian fact sheet.

Parapertussis is similar to pertussis but tends to be a milder disease than pertussis.

## CAUSE

*Bordetella parapertussis* bacteria.

## SYMPTOMS

Parapertussis begins with a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly a low-grade fever. The cough may occur in sudden, uncontrollable bursts, sometimes ending with high-pitched whooping sounds and/or vomiting.

## SPREAD

When a person with parapertussis coughs tiny droplets with parapertussis bacteria into the air and another person breathes them in.

## INCUBATION

It takes from 6 to 21 days, usually 7 to 10 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms start.

## CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

Unknown, but probably most infectious at the time of early cold-like symptoms.

## DIAGNOSIS

To confirm a diagnosis of parapertussis, laboratory tests are performed on material collected by placing a flexible swab through the nostril to the back of the nose and throat.

## EXCLUSION

Childcare and School: No exclusion necessary if the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.

## TREATMENT

Persons with parapertussis can be treated with antibiotics, but antibiotics may do little to lessen the symptoms. Treatment is most effective if started soon after cough begins if it is going to impact the course of the illness.

## PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough/sneeze into your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with secretions from the nose or mouth. Thorough hand washing is the best way to prevent spread of communicable diseases.
- Preventive treatment is not generally recommended for contacts of people with parapertussis. Preventive treatment may be considered for close contacts that are at a higher risk for more severe disease, including infants and immunocompromised persons.

- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled.

**For more information, please contact your local health department.**

[Southern Nevada Health District](#) (Clark County) 775-759-1300 (24 hours)

[Northern Nevada Public Health](#) (Washoe County) 775-328-2447 (24 hours)

[Carson City Health & Human Services](#) (Carson City, Douglas, Lyon Counties) 775-887-2190 (24 hours)

[Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#) (All other Counties) 775-400-0333 (24 hours)

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