

Adolescent Pertussis: Signs & Symptoms



Symptoms of Adolescent Pertussis:

What to Watch Out For

- ✦ The first symptoms of pertussis often mimic the symptoms of an upper respiratory infection, a cold or the flu, they are:
 - A low-grade fever
 - A runny nose
 - A cough that progressively becomes more severe

- ✦ Remember:
 - Severe coughing episodes may persist for up to 10 weeks
 - Adolescents generally exhibit different symptoms of the disease, often without the classic “whoop,” making it difficult to recognize
 - For these pertussis sufferers, severe coughing episodes can lead to vomiting, a hernia, or even a broken rib
 - Between coughing episodes, it is typical for individuals to appear symptom-free

- ✦ Pertussis is rarely fatal in older children, however the mortality rate is highest in unvaccinated infants who can catch the illness from family members or babysitters

Pertussis Facts & Figures:

Reported Cases have Grown

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- ✦ In 2003, there were over 11,000 cases of pertussis reported in the U.S. This is the highest number reported in nearly 40 years

- ✦ Approximately 40 percent of these cases were in the adolescent population (ages 10 -19)

- ✦ In comparison, approximately 1,000 pertussis cases were reported in 1976

- ✦ Up to 90 percent of household contacts may develop the disease when exposed to people infected with pertussis

Pertussis in Your Community

- ✦ Recent pertussis outbreaks in 2004 have occurred throughout the country in states such as New York, Wisconsin, Illinois, Utah and North Dakota. Recent surges of whooping cough outbreaks have been seen in middle - and high-schools around the country

- ✦ The disease can spread quickly and outbreaks can occur in any community, starting with just one person