



SARATOGA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE
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Pertussis---a.k.a. Whooping Cough

The illness can start with mild upper respiratory symptoms, low grade fever and a slight cough. In previously vaccinated individuals the onset of symptoms may start with just a cough.

Pertussis is passed on to others by direct contact with contaminated surfaces or airborne contact with respiratory droplets. Respiratory droplets can travel up to 3 feet in the air. Direct contact with respiratory, oral or pharyngeal secretions happens with kissing, sharing lip gloss, cigarettes, drugs, food and utensils.

When a person's test comes back positive we need to know the names and telephone numbers of people identified as close contacts. A close contact is someone who had direct face to face contact regardless of the number of hours spent together (e.g. close friends, playmates, household members, relatives, girlfriend, boyfriend, teammates, healthcare provider). Other contacts to consider are friends who sit together for lunch, on the school bus, people who are working on school projects together, after school activities (e.g. sports, other classes, religious instruction, clubs), parties, to name a few.

Once a person has been tested they must remain on home isolation until either the test comes back with a negative result or 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed.

Any questions can be directed to Saratoga County Public Health at 584-7460.

Thank you.