

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

PERTUSSIS CASES ON UPSWING AGAIN IN DELAWARE COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DELAWARE, Oh., Nov. 10, 2010 – Pertussis cases have climbed past the 100 mark in the Delaware General Health District this year. Most of the cases have been children.

The Health District is urging parents and others in close contact with young children to get a booster immunization to help stop the spread of Pertussis, often called Whooping Cough. The Tdap vaccine is available at the Delaware General Health District clinic in downtown Delaware.

The spread of Pertussis cases in Delaware County rose significantly after school let out for the summer. According to DGHD staff epidemiologist Travis Irvin, 82 of the 108 cases confirmed in Delaware County were reported since May 1, and all but 13 involved children under 18. Most people recover, but the disease can be deadly to infants and young children, and spreads very easily among people who have not been vaccinated.

“We fear we are seeing Pertussis spread from household to household because of unvaccinated adults and older children whose immunity has lessened over time,” said Joyce Richmond R.N., Director of Nursing for the Delaware General Health District. “No vaccine is 100 percent effective, but if more people get their Tdap boosters, it will help slow the spread of this preventable illness.”

Richmond noted that the vaccination against Pertussis is now recommended for:

- Adults through age 64 who are in close contact with infants.
- Family members and caregivers in households with infants.
- Women who have just given birth, to protect their newborns.

- Children aged two months to kindergarten age who have not received all of the recommended doses of vaccine.
- Children entering 7th grade.
- All school staff members and child care providers.

This year's Pertussis case count is the highest Delaware County has seen since 2007, when a record 246 cases occurred here. The coughing illness also has spread significantly in Franklin County and other Ohio communities.

Tdap boosters and other immunizations are available from the Delaware General Health District. Child Immunization Clinics are conducted every Thursday from 1 to 4 p.m. at 3 W. Winter St. in downtown Delaware. Child immunizations also are offered at that location on the second Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon, and on the last Tuesday of each month from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Child immunizations also are available at the Sunbury United Methodist Church on the second Tuesday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., and at the Genoa Township Community Hall on the third Wednesday of each month from 2 to 4 p.m.

Adults can get immunizations at the downtown Delaware clinic any weekday morning from 7:30 to 9 a.m., any Tuesday from 2 to 4 p.m., and on the last Tuesday of each month from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Appointments for immunizations are available, and clients can schedule their own appointments online. Phone the clinic at 740-203-2040 or log on to www.delawarehealth.org for more information.

In addition to promoting immunizations, Public Health workers in Delaware County and elsewhere are encouraging physicians to test symptomatic patients for Pertussis and to treat confirmed cases with antibiotics promptly. Parents are advised that any child with a persistent cough should be evaluated by a doctor.