

NEWS RELEASE

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Kittitas County Public Health Notified of Additional Pertussis Cases in the County

The Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) has received notice this week of another pertussis case in Kittitas County. As a result, KCPHD is working closely with Central Washington University (CWU) to try to stop any potential spread. The confirmed case of pertussis is associated with CWU men's rugby team.

To prevent further spread, KCPHD has recommended that all rugby players and associated staff for the team get tested for pertussis. CWU has been working closely with KCPHD and, as of today, all players have been tested.

Pertussis, or sometimes called whooping cough, is a notifiable condition. A notifiable condition means that healthcare providers and facilities, food service establishments, child day care facilities, and schools are required by law to notify the public health department.

“When we receive notice of a confirmed case, we immediately begin working to make sure the individual gets appropriate treatment and information about stopping further spread. We also identify possible high-risk contacts, like infants who are at higher risk of complications from pertussis,” states Communicable Disease Manager Kate Johnson.

Pertussis is spread from person to person through the air when someone with the condition coughs or sneezes. The people at the highest risk for pertussis are infants under one year old, pregnant women, and people with chronic respiratory illness. An individual with pertussis can be contagious two weeks after the cough starts. An individual may also not show signs of illness for 7 to 10 days after exposure. Symptoms include cough, stuffy nose, fever (less than 104°F), difficulty breathing, and vomiting after coughing fits.

Vaccination is the best prevention for pertussis. Vaccinations for pertussis are called Dtap or Tdap, depending on the age of the individual. The vaccine provides protection against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis in one vaccine. Please contact your healthcare provider if you have questions about the vaccination.

For vaccinations and testing, please contact your local healthcare provider, or for additional vaccination resources, you can contact KCPHD. For additional questions about this news release, please call KCPHD at 509-962-7515.

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