

May 1, 2019

CONFIRMED CASE OF WHOOPING COUGH AT LEO HAYES HIGH SCHOOL

Dear staff, parents and guardians,

There is a confirmed case of **whooping cough (pertussis)** at your school. You can find information about this disease in the Fact Sheet available at:

<http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/en/CDC/FactSheets/Pertussisfactsheet.pdf>

Whooping cough spreads between people by droplets from coughs and sneezes. Whooping cough can cause severe disease in young children. Whooping cough starts like a cold with sneezing, runny nose, low-grade fever and mild cough. Over the next week or two, the cough gets worse leading to serious coughing spells that often (but not always) end with a “whoop”. The coughing may be so severe that it makes the person gag or vomit. If you/your child develops symptoms like those described, please avoid contact with pregnant women and children less than 1 year of age, until you see your family doctor or an after-hours clinic. Tell your primary care provider that you/your child may have had contact with a confirmed case of whooping cough.

If your doctor thinks that your child has pertussis, they can **test** for the disease. A positive test result will allow Public Health to act to protect others from the disease. After a positive test result, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics and ask your child to stay home until you have finished treatment.

You can help stop the spread of diseases by washing your hands frequently, and staying home from school or work when you are sick. Pertussis can be prevented with a vaccine. Please check to see if you and your child have all of the recommended immunizations. In New Brunswick, children should have doses of **pertussis vaccine** at 2, 4, 6, 18 months, and 4 years of age. Adolescents in Grade 7 should receive a booster dose. Adults should receive one dose of pertussis- containing vaccine in adulthood.

If you or your child is missing any of these doses, please contact your primary care provider or Public Health to make an appointment for immunization. There is no cost to receive the recommended doses of the pertussis vaccine.

If you have any questions, please contact Public Health at 453-5200.

Sincerely,

Na-Koshie Lamptey MD MPH CCFP FRCP
Regional Medical Officer of Health