



Strategies for Preventing Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Adapted from The Speakers' Bureau
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

What is Whooping Cough?

- Disease is characterized by inexorable spasms of coughing, with a protracted course
 - Contagious disease-can spread from coughs or sneezes
 - Begins with mild cold-like symptoms
 - After week or 2 can lead to more serious problems
 - Vaccine-preventable disease
 - Also called pertussis



How Is Whooping Cough Treated?

- In adults:
 - 80-90% recover without treatment within 3-4 weeks
 - Those without treatment can infect others
 - Antibiotics
 - Preventive antibiotics for exposed individuals



How Is Whooping Cough Treated?



- In infants:
 - Antibiotics
 - Hospitalization
 - Monitoring
 - Preventive antibiotics for exposed individuals

Background: Complications



- Pneumonia
 - 9.5% (infants < 2 mos, 25%)
- Seizures
 - 1.4%
- Encephalopathy
 - 0.2%
- Death
 - 0.2% (infants < 2mos, 1%)
- Hospitalization
 - 32% (infants < 2 mos, 82%)

Whooping Cough in California

- There is an epidemic of pertussis in CA
 - 6,795 cases reported as of November 16, 2010
 - The largest number of cases reported in California since 1947
- Greater increase in CA than other states
 - One of 11 states that has not required middle school Tdap booster

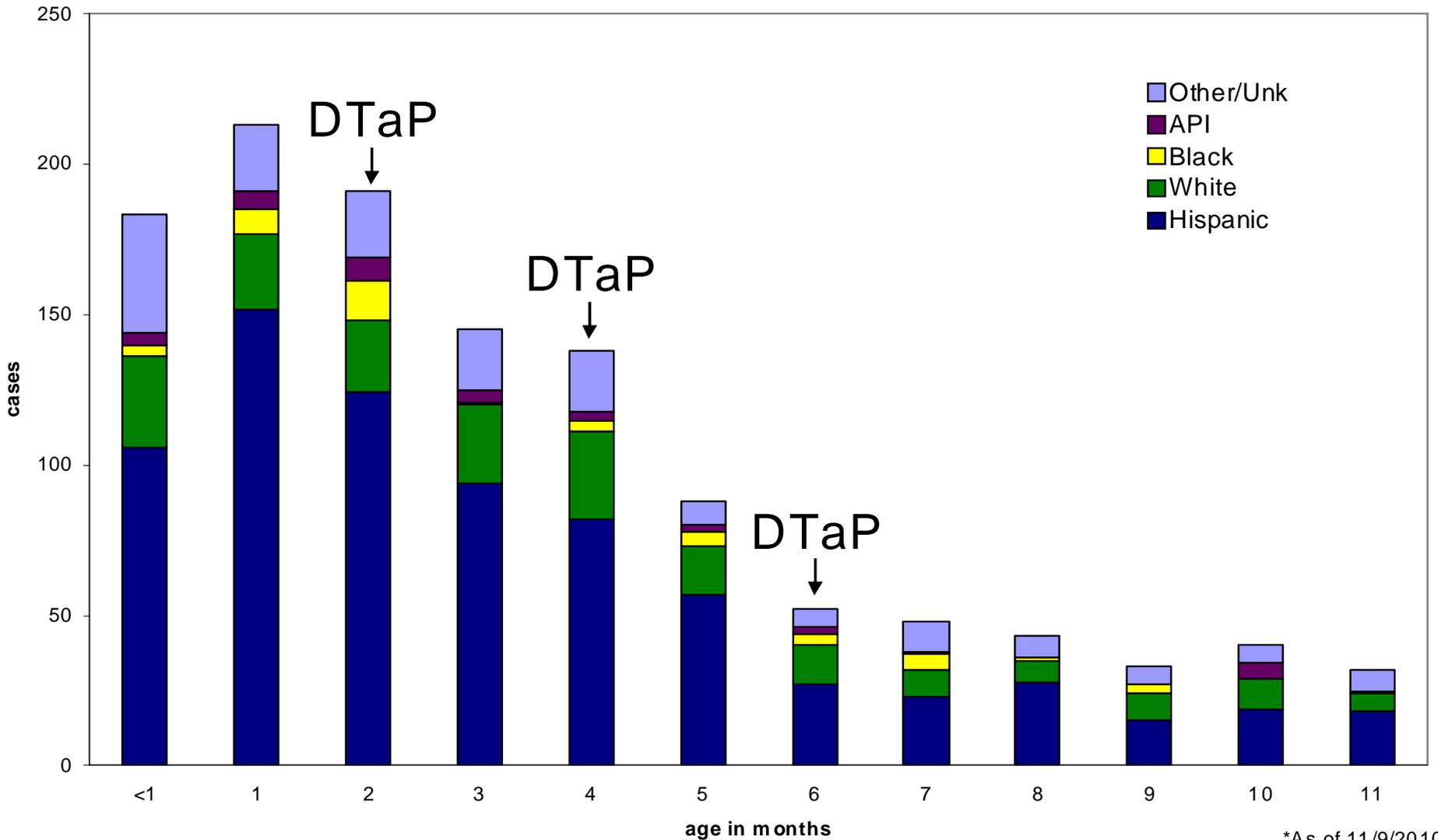


Whooping Cough in LA County

- As of September 24, 2010:
 - 994 possible cases
 - 591 cases laboratory confirmed, suspected, or probable
 - 4 deaths
- 156 cases in 2009

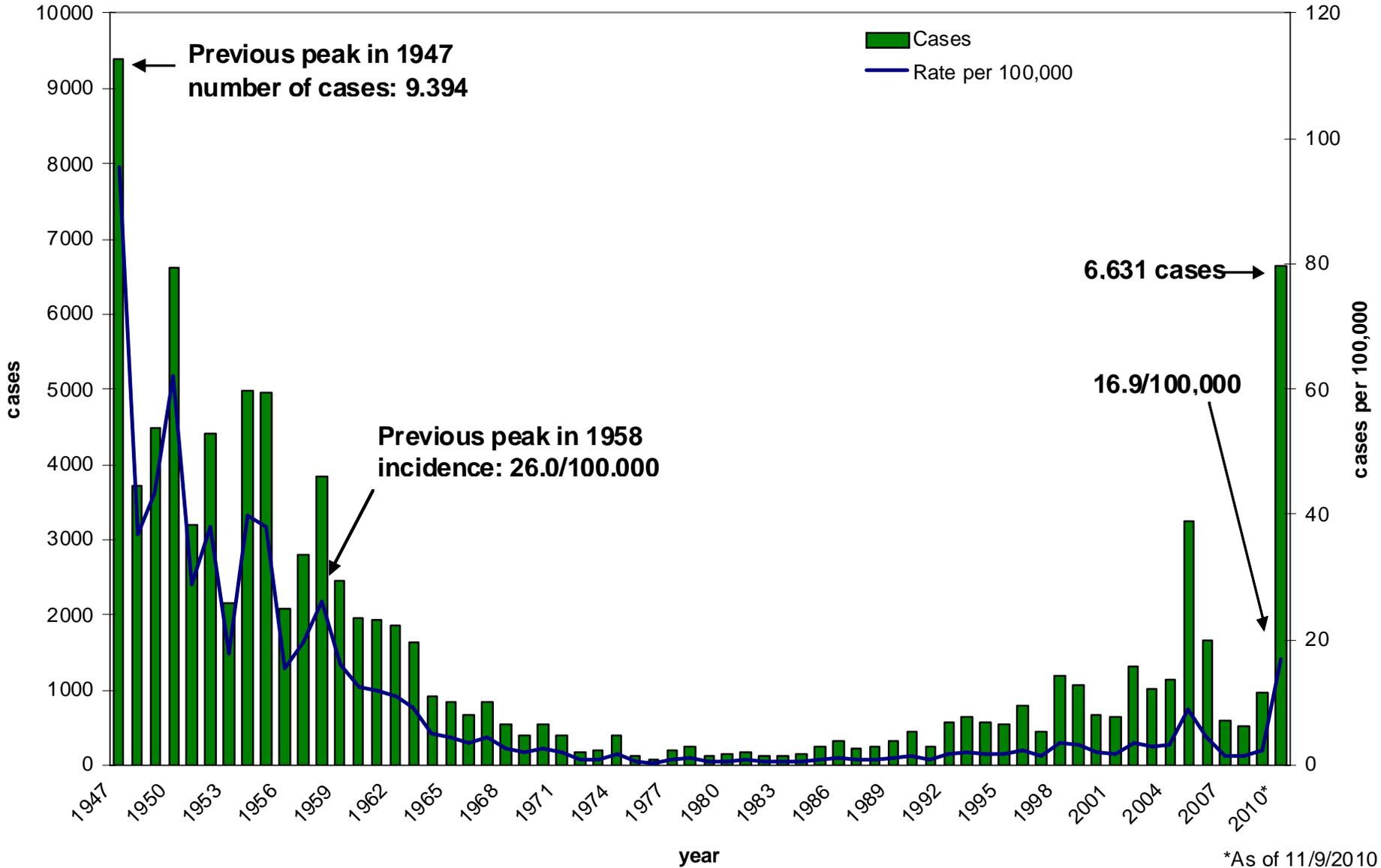


Infant pertussis cases by age in months -- California, 2010*



*As of 11/9/2010

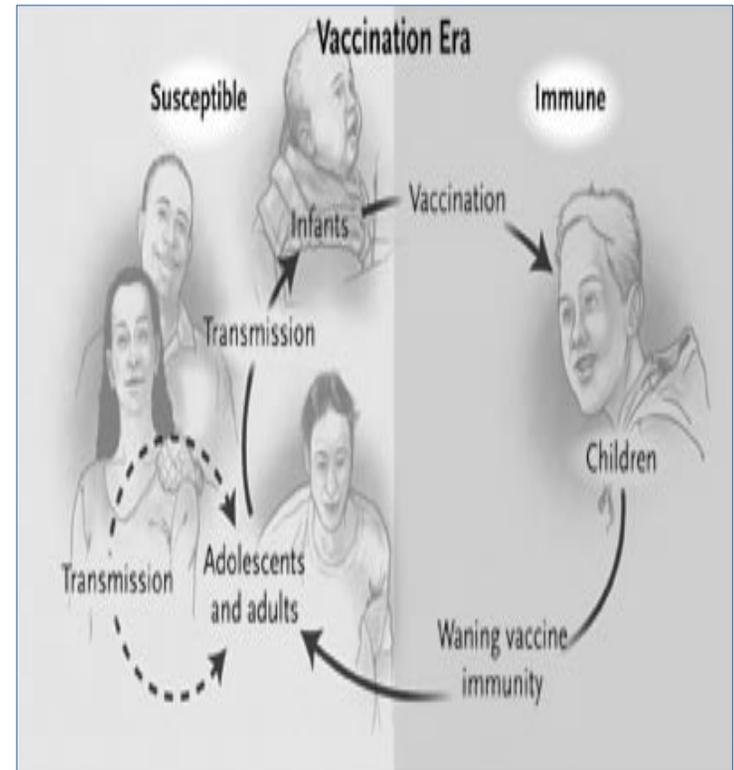
Number of reported pertussis cases by year of onset – California 1947-2010*



*As of 11/9/2010

The Pertussis Comeback

- Infected adolescents and adults expose infants, who are at greatest risk for complications
- Sources of infants' infection:
 - Sibling: 41%
 - Mother: 38%
 - Father 17%
 - Remainder unknown



“Cocooning”

- The practice of vaccinating adult and adolescent household contacts around the newborn infant
- Evidence that it will help prevent the spread of pertussis to infants

Who Should Get a Whooping Cough Vaccination?

- Vaccination is the best form of prevention.
- Five doses of DTaP for children at age 2, 4, 6, 15-18 months, and 4-6 years
- 1 dose of Tdap for pre-teens (11-12 years of age), adults, and anyone who is 7 years of age and older who is not fully immunized
- **Especially important for certain groups:**
 - Those who care for infants
 - Women of childbearing age, before, during or immediately following pregnancy
 - Healthcare personnel



Who Recommends These Vaccines?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)



How Effective are the Vaccines?

- Most effective form of prevention
- Children with 3-4 doses of DTaP are 80-85% less likely to develop whooping cough
- Tdap is similarly effective



Can I Be Vaccinated During Pregnancy?

- Tdap vaccines are recommended for women of childbearing age before, during or immediately following pregnancy
- During the epidemic, unvaccinated women should be vaccinated during pregnancy
 - Preferably in the 2nd or 3rd trimester
- CDC recommends that unvaccinated women receive the vaccine immediately post-partum
- Tdap is safe during breastfeeding



Where Can I Get Vaccinated?



- Your regular health care provider
- If you do not have insurance or a regular source of care:
 - Dial 2-1-1
 - Visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip
 - Receive referrals for locations offering low-cost or free of charge vaccinations

For More Information Contact...

Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health

Immunization Program

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[www. Publichealth.lacounty.gov /ip](http://www.PublicHealth.lacounty.gov/ip)