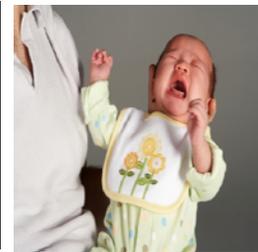


Pertussis:

Guidance for Emergency Departments



Large numbers of pertussis cases are being reported in Los Angeles County.

- **Be on the lookout for cases in your Emergency Department.**
- **Please consider patient/parental reports of symptoms, along with symptoms exhibited in the emergency department.**

Suspect Pertussis

In infants with:

- Severe cough
- Apnea
- Bradycardia
- Cold-like symptoms
- A respiratory illness of unknown cause

In others with an acute cough for 14 days, AND:

- Paroxysmal cough
- Post-tussive emesis
- Inspiratory “whooping” and/or no other apparent reason for prolonged cough

Don't rule out a pertussis diagnosis because the patient:

- Is asymptomatic when presenting at the Emergency Department
- Doesn't have a high fever
- Doesn't have the characteristic “whoop”
- Is up-to-date with pertussis vaccinations

Test for Pertussis

- Get a nasal aspirate or nasopharyngeal swab for PCR and/or culture.
- For culture specimens, place immediately onto Bordet Bordet-Gengou or Regan-Lowe agar culture media.

Treat Cases and Contacts

- Treat cases and provide chemoprophylaxis to household contacts and other high-risk contacts, regardless of age and vaccination status.
- Use an antibiotic that's effective against *Bordetella pertussis*, such as Azithromycin, Clarithromycin, Erythromycin, or TMP-SMX.

Don't forget to report all confirmed and suspected pertussis cases to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

For additional guidance, visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/DiseaseSpecific/Pertussis.htm

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