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--News Release--



Buchanan County Continues to Monitor Whooping Cough Outbreak

The Buchanan County Public Health Department continues to monitor and track an outbreak of whooping cough, also known as pertussis. Five cases have been confirmed. Because whooping cough is a highly contagious disease, it is difficult to trace its original to a specific individual or source. The important thing to remember is whooping cough can be prevented:

- The current outbreak is an opportunity to check your family's immunization status. If you have not had the Tdap, or pertussis vaccination, this is a good time to update your immunization status.
- If you have been exposed to whooping cough, it is important to call your local public health department to obtain antibiotics if the situation warrants.
- Whooping cough can only be transmitted by someone exhibiting symptoms, that is, someone who is coughing.
- Do not take the situation lightly. If asked to take antibiotics, please follow through with your health care providers orders, even if you feel well.

Whooping cough is most dangerous to infants and the elderly. Residents of the area should be aware of symptoms of whooping cough:

- Cold like symptoms of runny nose and irritating cough initially
- Within 1 – 2 weeks, individuals may have coughing spells that can not be controlled
- Some may have trouble getting their breath after coughing
- The gasping for air may produce a high-pitched whooping cough
- Coughing fits are most common at night, and can be followed by vomiting
- Between coughing spells, the individual appears well
- Whooping cough in teens and adults may have mild symptoms

Persons who feel they or a family member may have the disease should contact their doctor. Individuals who feel they may have been in contact with someone with whooping cough can contact the Buchanan County Health Center Public Health Department to talk through their situation.

For more information about whooping cough, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/pertussis.asp or call Buchanan Public Health Department at 319-332-0860.