



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:

June 19, 2024

MEDICAL ADVISORY: PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH) CASES IN HAWAII ISLAND RESIDENTS, UPDATE #2

- Pertussis cases on Hawaii Island continue to increase. As of June 10, HDOH has identified 13 new cases on Hawaii Island since reporting 11 cases in the April 19, 2024 [Pertussis Medical Advisory Update #1](#).
- Providers can help stop transmission of pertussis through the following actions:
 - Vaccinate
 - Test
 - Provide isolation guidance
 - Treat
 - Provide Prophylaxis
 - Implement infection control best practices.
- HDOH has created a Pertussis Tool Kit for Healthcare Providers to help providers implement effective strategies for prevention, infection control, timely diagnosis, and treatment.

Dear Healthcare Provider:

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) continues to investigate increased community transmission of pertussis (whooping cough) in West Hawaii. HDOH has identified a total of 24 cases of pertussis from nine households without travel-related exposure on Hawaii Island. The majority of reported cases are among children (see Table). Case households reside throughout West Hawaii, from Captain Cook and Kailua-Kona to Honokaa. All nine households have school-aged children who attend schools in these areas, with a total of 8 different schools impacted. Notifications have been provided to affected classrooms or grades. No cases have been hospitalized.

Table: Pertussis cases in West Hawaii by age group

Age (Years)	Number of cases (n=24)
0-4	9
5-10	8
11-17	2
18-44	5
45 and above	0

In addition to the Hawaii island cases, two cases have been reported on Kauai, and one on Oahu in 2024 without travel-related exposures. Of the 27 pertussis cases reported in the state in 2024, 13 (48%) were up to date on pertussis vaccines. As a reminder, Pertussis is endemic to Hawaii and should always be included in a provider’s differential diagnosis. Due to vaccine-induced immunity against pertussis waning over time, staying up to date with vaccination schedules as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices ([Immunization Schedules](#)) is critical to reducing spread of pertussis in the community. Vaccination also protects against severe disease.

What HDOH is doing:

- HDOH is working with the families and schools to identify close contacts and encourage them to seek medical attention for prophylaxis if indicated and testing and treatment if symptomatic.
- [HDOH’s Pertussis Tool Kit](#) for Healthcare Providers contains multimedia resources for healthcare providers to assist with timely diagnosis, treatment, isolation guidance, infection prevention and control, and patient and staff education.

What healthcare providers can do:

- **Vaccinate** all eligible patients against pertussis according to the ACIP recommended schedule ([Immunization Schedules](#)).
- **Test** suspected cases by collecting a nasopharyngeal swab for Pertussis PCR, preferably early in the course of illness ([Testing for Pertussis](#)).
- **Provide Isolation guidance.** Persons with pertussis should be excluded from school/work until completion of five days of appropriate antimicrobial therapy. Those who do not receive appropriate antimicrobial therapy should be excluded from school/work for 21 days after onset of symptoms.
- **Treat promptly.** Infants and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable ([Treatment for Pertussis](#)).
- **Provide Post-exposure Antimicrobial Prophylaxis (PEP)** which should be considered for all household contacts, and other close contacts at higher risk for developing severe disease ([PEP](#)).
- **Implement infection control best practices** in clinical settings to protect patients and staff against pertussis and other respiratory illnesses.
- **Use the [HDOH Pertussis Healthcare Provider Tool Kit](#)** to educate patients and staff about pertussis.

Urgently report any clinically suspected case of pertussis immediately to:

Oahu (Disease Reporting Line)	(808) 586-4586
Maui District Health Office	(808) 984-8213
Kauai District Health Office	(808) 241-3563
Big Island District Health Office (Hilo)	(808) 933-0912
Big Island District Health Office (Kona)	(808) 322-4877
After hours on Oahu	(808) 600-3625
After hours on neighbor islands	(800) 360-2575 (toll free)

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We appreciate your vigilance and assistance in protecting our communities from the spread of pertussis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah K. Kemble". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah K. Kemble, M.D.
State Epidemiologist

Enclosed:
Pertussis Tool Kit for Healthcare Providers