

Pertussis: Management Guidelines for General Practice

Suspected pertussis?

- A new coughing illness lasting 2 or more weeks **OR** paroxysms of cough **OR** inspiratory whoop **OR** post-tussive vomiting.
- New coughing illness and contact in previous 3 weeks with a case of infectious laboratory confirmed pertussis.

NO

YES

Manage as clinically indicated.

Management of suspected pertussis

- Consider if admission to hospital is necessary.
- Consider commencing antibiotic treatment on clinical suspicion to reduce risk of transmission if within 14 days of onset of any cough. See current edition of Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotics
- Exclude from childcare, pre-school, school or work until case is no longer infectious: until **EITHER** 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment **OR** 21 days after onset of any new cough **OR** 14 days after onset of paroxysmal cough (if onset known).

Laboratory testing

- PCR on throat or nasopharyngeal swab/aspirate for cases with recent onset of cough (use Dacron swab, send dry, not in transport medium)
- Testing of cases with contacts <6 months of age is particularly important.

Manage as clinically indicated.

- Review antibiotic treatment if already commenced.
- Review need for exclusion

YES

Positive test for pertussis?

NO

- Complete Report of Notifiable Condition or Related Death form.
 - Use the electronic form <https://extapps.health.sa.gov.au/cdcb-notify/> or
 - Use printed form or download from www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/NotifiableDiseaseReporting then fax to Communicable Disease Control Branch (CDCB) on (08) 8226 7187.
- See 'Management of suspected pertussis' above for advice on treatment and exclusion periods.

≤14 days since onset of paroxysmal cough if onset known; **or**
≤21 days since onset of any cough

YES

OR

>14 days since onset of paroxysmal cough if onset known; **or**
>21 days since onset of any cough

YES

Management of pertussis contacts

- **URGENT** phone call to CDCB 1300 232 272 for public health action if case had contact with high risk institutions while infectious (i.e. childcare, maternity hospital or neonatal unit).
- Identify household contacts and provide information on signs and symptoms of pertussis. Provide SA Health's You've Got What pertussis patient fact sheet www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/YouveGotWhat
- Provide antibiotic prophylaxis to **ALL** household members **IF** within 14 days of first exposure to infectious case **AND** contacts are children <6 months of age or expectant parents in the last month of pregnancy. See current edition of Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic.

- Case unlikely to be infectious.
- Antibiotic treatment is not recommended.
- Specific contact management is not required.

Immunisation

See the pertussis chapter of the current online Australian Immunisation Handbook.

- Offer opportunistic pertussis vaccination, if indicated.
- Promote timely primary and booster vaccination for children and adolescents; a dose as recommended for adults, including health care workers; and a dose for pregnant women from 20 weeks gestation in every pregnancy.



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