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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES REPORTS INFANT DEATH FROM PERTUSSIS (WHOOPIING COUGH)**

STOCKTON, CA (March 5, 2015) – Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, has claimed the life of a three-week old infant in San Joaquin County (SJC). “Our hearts go out to the family of this baby”, said Dr. Alvaro Garza, San Joaquin County Public Health Officer. Of the 23 cases of pertussis reported in SJC residents, as of March 4, 2015, this is the first death.

Last year, SJC had 212 pertussis cases reported, a dramatic increase from 2013 when there were 27 cases in the county. Within SJC, the incidence of pertussis has been higher in south county communities, particularly Manteca and Tracy. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reports that the state is currently experiencing a pertussis epidemic. Pertussis is cyclical and peaks every three to five years. The last epidemic in California was in 2010 with 9,159 cases; for 2014, the latest State pertussis report shows 11,114 cases.

Pertussis is a highly contagious illness that is spread from person to person, usually by coughing or sneezing while in close contact with others. It can be serious at any age, but may be life-threatening for newborns and infants who are too young to be fully vaccinated. Since infants (ages 0 to 12 months) are at greatest risk for developing severe complications that may lead to hospitalization and death from pertussis, health officials recommend that pregnant women receive pertussis vaccine (Tdap) during the third trimester of every pregnancy. Immunity is transferred from mother to fetus and can protect the baby until the regular immunization is given.

It is important to note that neither pertussis disease nor vaccine provides lifelong immunity, so childhood vaccinations and booster shots for older children and adults are the best prevention measures. Parents, grandparents, older siblings, day care workers, and other caregivers who have pertussis are most likely to pass their infection to an infant. Many of these caregivers might not even know they have the disease. Dr. Garza advises, “Everyone who has or will have frequent contact with an infant is urged to make sure that their pertussis vaccination is up-to-date; this is to provide a “cocoon” of protection around the infants and avoid inadvertently infecting them. In addition, anyone with a cough-illness of any kind should avoid contact with infants.”

Symptoms of pertussis can vary with age. Typical symptoms in older infants and young children include intense coughing accompanied by a whooping sound, and post-cough vomiting. Younger infants may not even be able to cough but could have severe trouble, or even stop, breathing. Complications can include

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pneumonia and seizures. Among older children and adults, the primary symptom is usually a cough that lasts for several weeks or longer. If you suspect that you or a loved one may have pertussis, contact your doctor right away.

Recommended pertussis vaccinations start during infancy with shots of DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) at two, four and six months of age for initial protection. Children should receive two booster shots by six years of age, followed by another booster during their preteen years (this last booster is called Tdap for tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis). These vaccines provide protection but, for pertussis, the protection fades over time. Experts recommend adults receive one dose of Tdap vaccine in place of the routine Td (tetanus, diphtheria). Being up-to-date with one dose of Tdap is especially important for adults who are around infants. Although only one dose of Tdap is recommended for adolescents and adults, persons who are around infants would do well to be revaccinated if it has been several years since receipt of Tdap. Contact your regular healthcare provider to arrange for recommended vaccinations. If you cannot get it at your health care provider, SJC Public Health Services (PHS) clinics have pertussis vaccine available. For PHS clinic schedules visit [http://www.sjcphs.org/Clinic/clinical\\_services.aspx](http://www.sjcphs.org/Clinic/clinical_services.aspx) or call 209-468-3830.

Everyone is also reminded and encouraged to daily practice standard hygiene habits in order to help prevent the spread of any illness. These healthy habits include washing your hands often with soap and water, staying home from work or school when sick, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes appropriately with a tissue.

For more information on pertussis and preventing the spread of whooping cough, visit:

- San Joaquin County Public Health Services website at <http://www.sjcphs.org>
- California Department of Public Health website at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx>
- U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/index.html>

To hear what pertussis sounds like, visit: <http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/pertussis.aspx>

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Attachments:

Data Table of Pertussis Cases and Rates for California Local Health Jurisdictions, 2010-2015  
Pertussis Fact Sheet

**Table 1. Pertussis cases and rate\* by year of onset and local health jurisdiction -- California, 2010-2015\*\***

	2010†		2011†		2012†		2013†		2014**	
	Cases	Rate	Cases	Rate	Cases	Rate	Cases	Rate	Cases	Rate
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	<b>9159</b>	<b>24.55</b>	<b>3016</b>	<b>8.03</b>	<b>1023</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2537</b>	<b>6.64</b>	<b>11114</b>	<b>29.09</b>
ALAMEDA	423	30.21	206	14.59	62	4.35	124	8.55	363	25.03
City of Berkeley‡	13	11.51	3	2.62	6	5.20	13	11.29	56	48.64
ALPINE	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
AMADOR	4	10.56	11	29.48	1	2.74	2	5.52	1	2.76
BUTTE	32	14.55	16	7.26	3	1.36	33	14.87	33	14.87
CALAVERAS	9	19.80	5	11.08	0	0.00	2	4.39	17	37.35
COLUSA	11	51.20	1	4.65	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
CONTRA COSTA	205	19.48	114	10.74	24	2.24	69	6.37	476	43.98
DEL NORTE	16	56.06	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	7.16
EL DORADO	54	29.85	11	6.09	3	1.64	4	2.18	36	19.63
FRESNO	550	58.99	58	6.17	16	1.69	44	4.59	392	40.88
GLENN	1	3.55	1	3.54	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	3.54
HUMBOLDT	58	43.07	15	11.09	1	0.74	5	3.71	148	109.78
IMPERIAL	9	5.13	3	1.69	8	4.49	3	1.68	10	5.58
INYO	8	43.17	0	0.00	1	5.29	0	0.00	0	0.00
KERN	376	44.70	49	5.77	2	0.23	31	3.58	162	18.69
KINGS	26	17.03	7	4.61	0	0.00	2	1.33	15	9.97
LAKE	5	7.74	3	4.66	2	3.11	3	4.66	3	4.66
LASSEN	1	2.85	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	15.28
LOS ANGELES	1303	14.12	612	6.61	209	2.24	342	3.63	1962	20.84
City of Long Beach‡	68	14.70	17	3.66	4	0.86	16	3.44	183	39.32
City of Pasadena‡	24	17.54	15	10.80	1	0.72	2	1.44	23	16.50
MADERA	120	79.30	8	5.26	0	0.00	10	6.53	47	30.71
MARIN	351	138.90	26	10.22	5	1.97	184	71.91	266	103.95
MARIPOSA	10	54.96	1	5.56	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
MENDOCINO	27	30.71	3	3.41	0	0.00	6	6.77	10	11.28
MERCED	131	51.19	27	10.42	0	0.00	1	0.38	9	3.42
MODOC	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	64.74
MONO	18	126.43	2	13.98	21	146.07	2	14.11	0	0.00
MONTEREY	132	31.71	38	9.05	17	4.03	49	11.54	127	29.90
NAPA	25	18.28	11	7.99	6	4.35	13	9.35	138	99.21
NEVADA	23	23.32	2	2.03	5	5.11	70	71.51	16	16.34
ORANGE	499	16.54	142	4.66	73	2.37	113	3.64	449	14.46
PLACER	80	22.84	19	5.33	11	3.05	86	23.55	122	33.41
PLUMAS	2	10.05	4	20.06	0	0.00	1	5.19	1	5.19
RIVERSIDE	467	21.31	166	7.48	46	2.04	80	3.53	456	20.11
SACRAMENTO	175	12.32	69	4.82	35	2.44	70	4.84	448	30.94
SAN BENITO	7	12.65	3	5.36	1	1.76	1	1.75	10	17.46
SAN BERNARDINO	182	8.93	115	5.60	54	2.62	39	1.88	197	9.49
SAN DIEGO	1140	36.74	398	12.73	162	5.14	408	12.82	1984	62.35
SAN FRANCISCO	141	17.49	70	8.61	30	3.65	59	7.10	120	14.44
SAN JOAQUIN	84	12.23	27	3.90	15	2.15	26	3.69	215	30.54
SAN LUIS OBISPO	371	137.54	15	5.55	14	5.17	17	6.25	45	16.56
SAN MATEO	191	26.54	58	7.97	23	3.13	104	14.00	129	17.37
SANTA BARBARA	66	15.57	18	4.23	11	2.58	28	6.48	120	27.76
SANTA CLARA	478	26.76	176	9.74	45	2.46	254	13.70	561	30.26
SANTA CRUZ	87	33.05	22	8.28	13	4.84	54	19.89	161	59.30
SHASTA	32	18.03	27	15.16	2	1.12	7	3.92	32	17.94
SIERRA	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
SISKIYOU	10	22.27	0	0.00	2	4.41	5	11.05	7	15.47
SOLANO	40	9.68	12	2.90	10	2.38	15	3.54	145	34.26
SONOMA	246	50.82	116	23.83	18	3.68	51	10.36	704	142.99
STANISLAUS	159	30.86	43	8.30	11	2.10	16	3.03	90	17.07
SUTTER	5	5.28	1	1.06	0	0.00	2	2.06	8	8.25
TEHAMA	10	15.75	1	1.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	38	59.90
TRINITY	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	37.21
TULARE	230	51.91	77	17.20	27	5.97	25	5.48	37	8.11
TUOLUMNE	32	58.03	4	7.27	1	1.85	2	3.68	16	29.48
VENTURA	372	45.09	163	19.63	15	1.80	36	4.28	350	41.65
YOLO	17	8.44	5	2.47	6	2.93	4	1.94	147	71.29
YUBA	3	4.15	0	0.00	1	1.37	4	5.46	10	13.65

\*Incidence rate per 100,000 persons

\*\*Includes cases reported to CDPH as of 2/12/2015

†Data have been updated from previous reports; population denominator data from the Department of Finance have been standardized with 2010 Census data

‡City health jurisdictions not included in county total

# Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Fact Sheet

[www.sjcphs.org](http://www.sjcphs.org)

## WHAT IS PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH)?

Pertussis is a very contagious disease of the respiratory tract caused by bacteria. Pertussis is also known as “whooping cough” due to the “whoop” sound often made when the infected person tries to breathe after hard coughing and choking spells.

## HOW IS PERTUSSIS SPREAD?

Pertussis is spread through airborne droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. The greatest risk of spread is during the early stage when the symptoms resemble a cold.

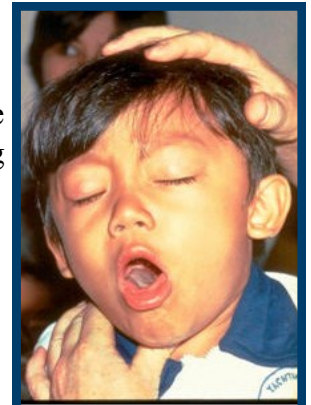
## SYMPTOMS OF PERTUSSIS:

- ◆ Low grade fever, runny nose, sneezing and occasional cough. In 1-2 weeks the cough becomes more severe.
- ◆ During bouts of coughing, the lips and nails may turn blue from lack of air. Vomiting can occur with severe episodes.
- ◆ In between coughing episodes people may feel and appear fairly healthy.
- ◆ In children less than 1 year old, complications include pneumonia, convulsions, and, in rare cases, brain damage. The majority of deaths from Pertussis occur in infants younger than 2 months of age.
- ◆ Many people cough for 1 month or longer.

## HOW IS PERTUSSIS TREATED?

- ◆ Call a doctor if you think you, or your children may have it or been exposed.
- ◆ An antibiotic is usually prescribed for treatment.

- ◆ Drink plenty of fluids to avoid being dehydrated.
- ◆ Carefully cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- ◆ Wash hands often using soap and water.
- ◆ Stay away from others, **especially** infants and young children, until you have been on antibiotics for 5 days.



Child with pertussis

## HOW CAN PERTUSSIS BE PREVENTED?

### FOR CHILDREN UNDER 7 YEARS:

The DTaP vaccine includes protection against pertussis. Children should get 5 doses of this vaccine; they need their first dose at 2 months of age. Additional doses are given at 4 months, 6 months, between 12–18 months and 4–6 years of age.

### IMMUNIZATION UPDATE FOR AGES 7 YEARS AND OLDER:

The pertussis containing vaccine, Tdap, is recommended as a booster for all ages seven years and older, particularly for people who have close contact with infants or pregnant women. It is required for all teens entering seventh grade of school.

## RESOURCES:

**San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS)**  
[www.sjcphs.org](http://www.sjcphs.org)  
[www.sjcphs.org/Disease/pertussis.aspx](http://www.sjcphs.org/Disease/pertussis.aspx)

**California Department of Public Health (CDPH)**  
[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)  
[www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Pertussis.aspx)

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)**  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/>