



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## ADPH continues pertussis investigation in East Alabama

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health's Immunization Division is continuing to investigate a pertussis outbreak in East Alabama. To date, there are 19 laboratory confirmed cases of pertussis at multiple schools in Chambers County. Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is a highly contagious respiratory and notifiable disease in Alabama.

"We are very appreciative of both the schools and parents that are assisting us in addressing this outbreak," said Dr. Karen Landers, Assistant State Health Officer. "Public Health will continue to ensure that those who have been exposed to the disease are educated and informed about symptoms and proper treatment."

Pertussis begins with symptoms such as a runny nose, low grade fever, and cough. After a week or two of the illness, pertussis progresses to violent coughing which often makes it hard to breathe. After fits of many coughs, someone with the illness often needs to take deep breaths resulting in a "whooping" sound. The best way to prevent pertussis (whooping cough) is to get vaccinated. There are vaccines for babies, children, preteens, teens and adults. The childhood vaccine is called DtaP, and the pertussis booster vaccine for preteens, teens and adults is called Tdap.

Immunization staff is collecting specimens for testing, contacting via phone parents of children who attend schools, and providing schools with information to disseminate to parents. Parents who are concerned that their children may be exhibiting symptoms should consult their child's primary physician to be tested for pertussis.

For more information on signs and symptoms of pertussis, or vaccination information, please visit [www.adph.org/immunization](http://www.adph.org/immunization).

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