

June 2024

An update from the Barwon South West Public Health Unit



Pertussis

Dear colleagues

- There has been an increase in pertussis cases in the Barwon South West region.
- Please test for pertussis if suspected on clinical assessment. This helps to identify any outbreaks in our region. PCR of nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate is the preferred diagnostic test.
- Pertussis must be [notified](#) by medical practitioners to the Department of Health within 5 days of diagnosis.
- Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Schedule 7):
 - Cases diagnosed with pertussis must be excluded from primary school and children's services centres for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed five days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
 - Contacts in primary schools and children's services centres aged less than seven years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken five days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment.
- Vaccination reduces the risk of infection and severe illness. Please check the immunisation status of all children and ensure their vaccinations [are up to date](#).
- For further information see the Department of Health website. [Pertussis \(whooping cough\) | health.vic.gov.au](#) or contact Barwon South West Public Health Unit: phu@barwonhealth.org.au or phone (03) 4215 3531.

Kind regards,

Barwon South West Public Health Unit