



Buncombe County Health and Human Services-Public Health

Ellis Matheson, DNP, RN
Public Health Director

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

We want to inform you that we are seeing an increase in pertussis (whooping cough) in children in Buncombe County. Anyone can get pertussis, even those who have been vaccinated. Pertussis is especially dangerous for babies. Please read the included Pertussis Fact Sheet for more information.

If your child has recently started coughing, please keep them out of group activities – including childcare/school, sports, and extracurricular activities – and contact your child’s healthcare provider as soon as possible. Let the healthcare provider know that your child is coughing and that pertussis is being seen in the community. Your child should wear a mask when around others until directed by their healthcare provider.

If your child is diagnosed with pertussis, tell their childcare/school, and keep your child home from childcare/school and other group activities until they have taken 5 days of antibiotics to treat pertussis. This helps prevent the spread of pertussis to others.

Please make sure your family’s vaccinations are up to date.

- Babies and children younger than 7 years old should get the DTaP vaccine on the recommended vaccination schedule.
- Protection against pertussis from the DTaP vaccine decreases over time. Therefore, older children and adults should get at least one dose of the pertussis booster vaccine called Tdap, regardless of how long it has been since their most recent tetanus vaccine.
- Tdap may be given as the routine tetanus booster vaccine every 10 years.
- Pregnant people should get a dose of the Tdap vaccine in the third trimester of each pregnancy to protect themselves and their infants.
- If you have questions about pertussis vaccines or need one, contact your healthcare provider or call the Buncombe County Health and Human Services Immunization Clinic at 828-250-5096.

If you have any questions or concerns about pertussis, please call the Buncombe County Communicable Disease staff at 828-250-5109.

Sincerely,

Ellis Matheson, DNP, RN
Public Health Director

Jennifer Mullendore, MD, MSPH
Medical Director

