

Insert Letterhead

Thursday, September 19, 2013

Re: Change in **pertussis** prevention recommendations

Dear Healthcare Provider,

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) has recently modified the state's recommendations for use of antimicrobials for pertussis post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). The recommendations were updated to align with new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and to be more consistent with national pediatric recommendations (Red Book).

The focus of these new recommendations is to protect persons at high risk of severe illness, including infants (<12 months of age), pregnant women in their third trimester, and persons with certain pre-existing health conditions.

Under the new guidance, antimicrobial prophylaxis would be recommended for the following exposed persons:

- Household contacts of laboratory confirmed cases
- Close contacts of laboratory confirmed cases who are at high risk of severe illness or who themselves have close contact with persons at high risk of severe illness.
- Those at high risk include:
 - infants (≤ 12 months of age),
 - women in their third trimester of pregnancy, and
 - persons with pre-existing health conditions that may be exacerbated by a pertussis infection (including, but not limited to immunocompromised persons and patients with moderate to severe medically treated asthma).

When a case of pertussis is reported to public health, the following actions will occur:

- 1) Local public health will interview the case to identify household and close contacts.
- 2) Identified household and close contacts will be given a letter documenting their exposure to pertussis with instructions to contact their healthcare provider (HCP). On the back of this letter will be additional information for the HCP on determining the need for prophylactic antibiotics (based on the HCP's assessment of their individuals' risk of severe disease) and need for vaccination.
- 3) The HCP will also need to determine if the patient is at risk of spreading pertussis to high risk close contacts (patients in close contact with high risk persons also need to be given prophylactic antibiotics to reduce their risk of spreading pertussis to those people).

Thank you for all you do to support public health in our community. Please contact (*insert agency name and contact information*) with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,