Follow-up Recommendations for Pertussis Exposures in the Health Care Setting

**Health care workers exposed** to a patient infected with pertussis
For health care workers (HCW) caring for a patient with pertussis, identify the type of exposure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of HCW exposure (patient's cough was less than 21 days at time of exposure)</th>
<th>Recommended follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Face-to-face contact with coughing or sneezing patient while HCW not masked*, or Performing or assisting with procedures that induce coughing or produce aerosols while HCW not masked*, or Presence in same room with coughing or sneezing patient while HCW not masked* and performing a close-contact activity (e.g., bathing, feeding) | Antibiotic prophylaxis or 21-day symptom watch from time of exposure  
- Decision whether to prophylax or initiate symptom watch should take into consideration the patient population seen by the HCW. Example: Antibiotics would likely be preferred over symptom watch for a HCW who staffs a neonatal intensive care unit. |
| Presence in same room with coughing or sneezing patient while HCW not masked* and without close contact | Recommend 21-day symptom watch from time of exposure |

**Patients/staff exposed** to a health care worker infected with pertussis
For patients or staff in close contact with an infected HCW, identify the type of exposure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of patient exposure (HCW's cough was less than 21 days at time of exposure)</th>
<th>Recommended follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If a HCW has pertussis, please contact the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) for guidance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCW was masked* while infectious and working with patients</td>
<td>No notification of patients is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCW was not masked* while infectious and had contact with patients less than 12 months of age or pregnant women</td>
<td>Call MDH and notify of exposure. MDH will work with you to recommend post-exposure prophylaxis letters** and/or phone calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCW was not masked* while infectious and had contact with patients who had a pre-existing lung condition that would make them susceptible to a more severe case of pertussis</td>
<td>Mail notification letter** and recommend post-exposure prophylaxis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCW was not masked* while infectious and patient was not less than 12 months old, pregnant, or otherwise compromised with a lung condition</td>
<td>Mail notification letter** recommending testing if symptoms develop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Staff who worked with an infected HCW and had prolonged, close proximity, and unprotected contact | Recommend antibiotic prophylaxis or 21-day symptom watch from time of exposure  
- Decision whether to prophylax or initiate symptom watch should take into consideration the patient population seen by the exposed HCW. Example: For exposed HCW that normally sees patients who are pregnant or less than 12 months of age, antibiotics may be preferred over a 21-day symptom watch. |

*Surgical or procedure mask is sufficient.  
** Letter templates are available through MDH.

**Treatment Guidance:** If you have questions about appropriate antimicrobials and dosage amounts, please refer to  
[www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/pertussis/hcp/treatment.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/pertussis/hcp/treatment.html).

**Repeat Exposures:** For questions on whether or not to repeat prophylaxis, please call 651-201-5414 or 1-877-676-5414.

**References**
Shefer, A. et al. (November 2011). Immunization of Health-Care Personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR 60(RR07);1-45.  
[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6007a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6007a1.htm)

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