

# DPHHS HAN ADVISORY



## Cover Sheet

**DATE:** July 26, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Pertussis Awareness for Schools and Athletics

### INSTRUCTIONS:

***DISTRIBUTE*** to your local HAN contacts. This HAN is intended for general sharing of information. **Remove this cover sheet before redistributing and replace it with your own.**

**For LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT reference only**

DPHHS Subject Matter Resource for more information regarding this HAN, contact:

**CDCP Immunization  
1-406-444-5580**

**DPHHS Health Alert Hotline:  
1-800-701-5769**

**DPHHS HAN Website:  
[www.han.mt.gov](http://www.han.mt.gov)**

**Remove this cover sheet before redistributing and replace it with your own.**

**Please ensure that DPHHS is included on your HAN distribution list.**

### Categories of Health Alert Messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

**Please call DPHHS to update contact information at 444-0919 or 444-6906**

# Information Sheet

**Date:** July 26, 2012

**Subject:** Pertussis Awareness for Schools and Athletics

## **Information: Recommendations for Assessment and/or Vaccination of School-aged Children Background**

Several areas of Montana continue to report sporadic cases of pertussis. As of July 25, 2012, the state's total pertussis case count for the year is 360. Approximately two-thirds of reported pertussis cases were school-aged children aged 5 to 18 years. This age group will be returning to school soon. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and local public health agencies are encouraging healthcare providers, schools, and sports teams to be aware of our continuing outbreak and to consider the following recommendations:

### **1) Immunization is still the most effective strategy to ensure a healthy student population for the upcoming school year**

We encourage healthcare providers to ensure all students are up-to-date on the recommended pertussis containing vaccines. When assessing children for their vaccination status during annual and sports physicals, we strongly recommend healthcare providers use DTaP for under vaccinated elementary-aged children and Tdap for under vaccinated middle school and high school-aged children. Unvaccinated children have at least an eightfold greater risk for pertussis than children fully vaccinated with DTaP. Although vaccinated children can develop pertussis they are less infectious, have milder symptoms and shorter illness duration, and are at reduced risk for severe outcomes, including hospitalization (*Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report, July 20, 2012*).

### **2) School Review and Enforcement of State Statutes and Rules**

We encourage all schools to review student immunization records. A history of receiving pertussis containing vaccines is required for school attendance and differs by the child's age (Administrative Rules of Montana 37.114.705). Elementary-aged school children who are under vaccinated should be referred promptly for catch-up vaccinations. Children entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade are required to have a tetanus containing vaccine. We strongly recommend the administration of a single dose of Tdap to fulfill this requirement. We also strongly encourage the administration of a single dose of Tdap to any middle school and high school-aged children not currently up-to-date on their pertussis-containing vaccinations.

### **3) Sports & Other School Activities**

School athletic programs and other extra-curricular activities provide additional opportunities for exposure to pertussis. We encourage coaches and instructors to refer students who have unusual or prolonged coughing to a healthcare provider for medical evaluation, as these signs may indicate a pertussis illness. For additional information on pertussis or other conditions of concern in your area, please contact your local public health agency.