

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tara Biesecker
Public Information Officer

PHONE: (208) 799-3100

CONTACT: Cara Hawkins
University Communications

PHONE: (208) 885-6259

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HEADLINE: Laboratory Confirms Pertussis in University of Idaho Student

LEWISTON, IDAHO – Public Health – Idaho North Central District has received lab confirmation of a case of pertussis in a University of Idaho student in Moscow. The investigation is ongoing. Pertussis is a reportable disease in Idaho; Public Health is working closely with health care providers and the University of Idaho to identify additional cases.

Pertussis is a communicable disease that is spread through the air from an infected person by coughing, sneezing or talking. Pertussis begins with cold-like symptoms and a cough that becomes progressively worse over one to two weeks. Coughing usually happens in long bouts, sometimes followed by a whooping noise. Antibiotics can make the disease milder in those infected and will prevent transmission of the illness to others. Individuals exposed to pertussis should be given antibiotics to prevent the disease, even if they were previously vaccinated.

Public Health reminds people to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses by covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, disposing of used tissues and washing your hands thoroughly.

Children should get five doses of the DTap vaccine (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis), one dose at each of the following ages: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15-18 months and 4-6 years. Adolescents and adults also need protection from pertussis. It is recommended that adolescents (ages 11-12), teenagers and adults younger than 65 receive the Tdap vaccine (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) as a one-time booster. Pregnant women can receive the Tdap vaccine prior to delivery. New mothers who have never received Tdap should get a dose as soon as possible after delivery.

To learn more about pertussis and vaccinations, please call your health care provider or Public Health - Idaho North Central District at 208-799-3100.