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Public Health Advisory

Confirmed cases of whooping cough in Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet

December 9, 2016
Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet, NU **60 sec**

The Department of Health is advising residents of Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet that whooping cough (pertussis) has been identified in these communities.

Whooping cough is an infection of the throat and lungs that is spread very easily from person to person through close contact with drops of fluid from the nose and throat of someone who has the disease. Anyone can get whooping cough, but the most severe cases are in children under the age of one.

Early diagnosis and treatment with antibiotics are important. Any person with symptoms should see a health care provider. These symptoms include:

- repeated forceful coughing spells
- coughing that ends in vomiting, gagging, difficulty catching breath, or an unusual “whoop” sound
- coughing that is worse at night

In some circumstances, family and friends of people with pertussis may be offered antibiotics to prevent the disease. Since whooping cough can also be prevented by immunization, it is important that everyone in the community is up to date with their immunizations.

Other precautions include:

- frequent handwashing
- coughing into your sleeve or tissue
- not sharing drinks, utensils or toothbrushes

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