



# Public Health Advisory

## Protect yourself from whooping cough

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Nunavut

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The Department of Health advises that whooping cough (pertussis) has now spread throughout the territory, and is a serious and active health concern.

The best way to protect yourself from whooping cough is to ensure everyone in your household is vaccinated. It is very important that pregnant women in the last trimester, and their families, receive the pertussis vaccine to protect the babies, who could get very sick if they get infected.

Whooping cough is a disease of the throat and lungs that spreads from person to person. Anyone can get whooping cough, but children under the age of one are most at risk of serious illness.

The Department of Health is advising parents of children and youth or any adult who have the following symptoms to visit or contact the hospital in Iqaluit or your community health centre:

- a cough followed by an unusual sound that sounds like “whoop” or a funny sounding cough
- vomiting after coughing or not breathing after coughing

Other things you can do to prevent infection with pertussis include:

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

Any cough can be made worse by cigarette smoke, so make sure no one smokes indoors.

Please contact your community health centre to check if your immunizations are up to date. For more information, please read the [pertussis fact sheet](#) on the Department of Health website.

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