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Public Health Alert: First Case of Pertussis Confirmed for 2026

The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) received one new laboratory-confirmed *Bordetella pertussis* (*pertussis*) report on January 08, 2026. This is the first confirmed pertussis case for 2026. Epidemiologic case investigation and contact tracing have been initiated to determine the source of the exposure. While this is the first confirmed case of 2026, DPHSS continues to monitor respiratory illness trends across the island. Residents can view the latest surveillance figures and historical data on the official Guam Communicable Disease dashboard at: <https://elc.guam.gov/epi-reports>.

Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, is a vaccine-preventable disease. DPHSS is encouraging the public to ensure they are up to date with their vaccines. It is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria. It can cause severe coughing fits (up to 10 weeks or more), followed by a high-pitched “whoop” sound when breathing in. Vomiting and exhaustion may also follow. Pertussis can lead to serious complications, especially in infants, such as pneumonia, dehydration, seizures, and brain damage. Some infants may not cough at all. Instead, they may have apnea (life-threatening pauses in breathing) or struggle to breathe.

Recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Recommended Vaccine	Age Group	Recommended Schedule
Diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis (DTaP)	< 7 years old	One dose at each of the following ages: 2, 4, 6, and 15-18 months, and 4-6 years
Tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap)	7-10 years old	Individuals who are not fully vaccinated with DTaP: 1 dose of Tdap as part of the catch-up series: if additional doses are needed, use Td or Tdap. A Tdap booster dose to be administered at age 11-12 years old.
	11-18 years old	Individuals who have not received Tdap: A single dose, preferably at age 11-12 years old.
	19 years or older	Adults who have not received Tdap previously or for whom vaccination status is unknown should receive a single dose.
	Pregnant women	One dose during each pregnancy (preferably during 27-36 weeks gestation). If Tdap is not given during pregnancy, administer immediately after delivery.

DTaP and Tdap vaccines are available for VFC eligible children at the following DPHSS locations:

Northern Region Community Health Center (NRCHC) and Southern Region Community Health Center (SRCHC):

- To schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine, individuals can call NRCHC at (671)-635-7412/7456/7547 or call the SRCHC at 671-828-7623.

Individuals may also call the Bureau of Family Health and Nursing Services (BFHNS) located in the NRCHC at (671)-634-7408 for more information on clinic hours and location.

If you are experiencing flu or pertussis-like symptoms you are encouraged to contact your primary care provider. We appreciate your assistance in taking precautionary measures to protect yourself and the health of the community.

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