

Whooping cough (Pertussis) – Information for cases and their families.

This information sheet tells you about whooping cough and what to do if you or a member of your household has been diagnosed with it.

Whooping cough, also called pertussis, is a bacterial infection which causes bouts of coughing for 2 to 3 months or more. The cough eventually goes away but severe illness can occur in vulnerable people, particularly babies and young children. For more information on whooping cough, please visit the [NHS Inform page](#).

Key points:

- People with whooping cough remain infectious until 48 hours after starting antibiotics, or (if they are not treated with antibiotics) for 21 days from the start of their cough.
- Anyone who has been diagnosed with whooping cough should therefore not attend nursery/school/work and should avoid contact with others until they are no longer infectious. Provided they are then well enough, they can return to normal activities once:
 - They have been treated with antibiotics for whooping cough for 48 hours, or
 - If the person with whooping cough is not treated with antibiotics, 21 days have passed since the cough began.
- If any other member of your household develops symptoms of whooping cough, they should get assessed by their GP.

People who are vulnerable to severe whooping cough or who are at risk of passing it on to vulnerable groups:

Infants under 1 year who have not been fully vaccinated against whooping cough / pertussis are more vulnerable to developing severe illness following infection.

The following categories of people are more at risk of transmitting whooping cough to vulnerable infants:

- Pregnant women who have reached 32 weeks gestation but have not yet had a pertussis-containing vaccine during pregnancy
- Healthcare workers who work with infants and pregnant women
- People whose work involves regular, close or prolonged contact with infants
- People who share a household with infants.

People who belong to the above groups may need preventative antibiotics and immunisation following close contact with a person with whooping cough.

Please call PHPU on 0141 201 4917 (Mon-Fri 9-5) if:

- 1. Your / your child's cough began less than 21 days ago, or**
- 2. You or a member your household belongs to one of the groups listed above.**