

Pertussis (Group Exposure)

Date: June 1, 2023

To: Two Hills, St. Paul and Elk Point Family Physicians and Emergency Departments

From: Dr. Ifeoma Achebe, Medical Officer of Health, Central Zone
Dr. Kathryn Koliaska, Medical Officer of Health, North Zone

Subject: Pertussis in the Two Hills

Dear Colleagues:

Recently, some cases of pertussis have emerged in the Two Hills area. These cases may have exposed individuals residing or visiting these areas to pertussis.

Physicians are urged to maintain a high index of suspicion when assessing patients with pertussis defining symptoms. Individuals may present to you with a physician-letter in instances where the person is a possible case, high-risk-contact, or a vulnerable-contact.

Isolation of ill cases at home is advised until 5 days of antibiotic treatment has been completed. Office and Emergency Department Infection Prevention and Control precautions are those for droplet precautions in addition to routine practices. Health Care Workers should use a surgical mask and eye protection (droplet precautions), with consideration of gloves and gown if patient is coughing (routine practices). While waiting to be assessed, the patient should be given a mask and placed in a separate room, or if unavailable, at least 2 meters from others. Testing for pertussis is via nasopharyngeal (NP) swab, taken and submitted in Regan Lowe medium, or charcoal as an alternate.

Please report suspect pertussis cases prior to lab results becoming available to allow timely follow-up of contacts.

Contact the Provincial Communicable Disease Control (Notifiable Diseases) with questions or to report cases.

- Daily 08:30 to 16:00 by email provincialcdcintake@ahs.ca, or call 1-855-444-2324.
- All other times phone the MOH/delegate on-call at 403-356-6430 (Central Zone sites) or 1-800-732-8981 (North Zone sites)

Further information on the management of pertussis cases and contacts is available at the Alberta Health Notifiable Diseases web page: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/pertussis>.

Thank you for your assistance.