



Monmouth County Health Department

Home for the Holidays with a cough!

The National Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that pertussis is spread from person to person. People with pertussis usually spread the disease to another person by coughing or sneezing or when spending a lot of time near one another where you share breathing space.

Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory disease known for uncontrollable, violent coughing which often makes it hard to breathe. After fits of many coughs, someone with pertussis often needs to take deep breaths which result in a "whooping" sound.

The disease usually starts with cold-like symptoms and maybe a mild cough or fever. After one to two weeks and as the disease progresses, the traditional symptoms of pertussis may appear and include coughing fits followed by a high-pitched "whoop," vomiting and exhaustion.

If your child or a member of your family was exposed to pertussis and have a cough or cold like symptom,

Do we still go to the mall? How about the holiday party? Family gatherings? Play dates?

It is best to avoid the above activities. Anyone who presents with Pertussis symptoms as described should contact their health care professional immediately. If your health care provider suspects pertussis they will provide antibiotics (Zithromax) for 5 days and you should stay home for those days. You will no longer be infectious after completing the 5 days of antibiotics.

So what do we do for the holidays? Make your holiday at home special;

- ❖ Bake cookies together
- ❖ Have each family member pick out a favorite card or board game to play
- ❖ String popcorn for decorations
- ❖ Watch a family friendly movie together
- ❖ Call family and friends you were going to celebrate with and plan your celebration for the following weekend. Holidays and families can be celebrated anytime not just a day designated on the calendar
- ❖ Hide gifts and have a treasure hunt.
- ❖ But remember the person who is ill should cover their cough and wash their hands frequently!
- ❖ Enjoy your holiday and make your "Home for the Holidays with a Cough" special!

Stay safe and have a wonderful holiday!

