**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For more information, contact:**

Name

Title

Phone

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 **[Public Health Agency Name] Asks Community to Act:**

**Protect Against Whooping Cough**

(City, Iowa) – [Name of Public Health Agency] and the [Iowa Department of Health and Human Services](https://hhs.iowa.gov/) (Iowa HHS) are urging Iowans to talk with their healthcare providers about being vaccinated against pertussis, also known as [whooping cough](https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/about/index.html). Cases of this highly contagious respiratory infection rise during the winter, increasing the risk of serious illness, especially among infants, older adults and people with underlying medical conditions. People protect themselves and those around them from whooping cough by getting vaccinated.

Whooping cough is easily spread from person to person by air through coughing or sneezing. Infected people can spread bacteria from the start of symptoms and for at least two weeks after coughing begins. Early symptoms often mimic those of the common cold, including runny nose, sneezing and mild fever. As the disease progresses, the persistent cough can become severe, leading to violent coughing fits, vomiting, difficulty breathing and the characteristic “whooping” sound.

“Whooping cough can be dangerous for anyone, but it’s especially severe for infants under the age of one who are too young to be fully vaccinated,” said [Name, Title]. “The good news is that the vaccine is a safe, effective way to prevent whooping cough and protect those most at risk. We’re encouraging everyone, particularly parents and caregivers, to make sure they are up to date on vaccinations.”

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the DTaP vaccine for children under 7 years of age and the Tdap booster for preteens, teens and adults. Pregnant women are also encouraged to get the Tdap vaccine during the third trimester to provide newborns with early protection against the infection. Find more information about whooping cough on the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/about/index.html).

**About [Name of Public Health Agency]**

[Add boilerplate copy for health agency here. This is a summary of the organization. It should highlight key information such as the mission, services and notable achievements. The goal is to provide context about the organization and establish credibility for unfamiliar readers.]

For more information, visit the [Name of Public Health Agency] website: [link to website].

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**Source:** [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/about/index.html)