Your child may have been exposed to:

**Pertussis**

Pertussis (whooping cough) can be a serious bacterial illness especially in young, unvaccinated children.

**If you think your child has Pertussis:**

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**
  
  **Childcare and School:**
  
  Yes, until 5 days after your child starts taking antibiotics.

If staff or children are not treated, they need to stay home until 21 days after cough starts.

**Symptoms**

Your child may first have a runny nose, sneezing, mild cough, and possibly fever.

After 1 or 2 weeks, your child may cough in explosive bursts. These coughing attacks can end in vomiting and/or in a high-pitched whoop. Coughing attacks occur most often at night. This may last up to three months.

If your child has been infected, it may take 4 to 21 days (usually 7 to 10 days) for symptoms to start.

**Spread**

- By coughing or sneezing.

**Contagious Period**

From the time of the first cold-like symptoms until 21 days after coughing begin. Antibiotics shorten the time a child with pertussis can give it to others.

**Call your Healthcare Provider**

If someone in your home has:

- had a cough 7 or more days. Laboratory tests may be done. Antibiotics will reduce the contagious period, but may do little to relieve your child’s cough.

- been exposed to pertussis. Also, if public health has recommended that antibiotics are needed because of an exposure.

**Prevention**

- Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing. Use a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- In Minnesota, all children 2 months of age or older enrolled in childcare or school must be vaccinated against pertussis or have a legal exemption. **There is also a pertussis vaccine for adolescents and adults**, especially those who have close contact with children under one year of age.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Kentucky Department for Public Health Frankfort, KY  http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/
Kentucky Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY  EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222
Lake Cumberland District Health Department Somerset, KY  www.lcdhd.org  (606) 678-4761
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA  Toll free: 1-800-311-3435 www.cdc.gov