



Pertussis

**Suspect.
Test.
Never Guess.**

Pertussis is circulating in Northern Virginia. Not every cough is whooping cough, but you should be aware that breakthrough cases are possible.

 *flip for more*

Fully vaccinated patients may not present with classic symptoms.

- Early symptoms include low-grade fever, runny nose, and a mild cough.
- Persistent coughing fits (paroxysms), inspiratory “whoop” sound, post-tussive vomiting, and/or apnea may or may not develop later.
- Rule out other etiologies (COVID-19, influenza, parainfluenza, RSV, enterovirus, rhinovirus) and test for pertussis with PCR and culture.
- Call the health department if you suspect pertussis.

Close contact? Offer prophylaxis before symptoms start.

- Was your patient a close contact to a pertussis case? They (and only they) should receive post-exposure prophylaxis before symptoms have a chance to begin.
- Prophylaxis is a 5-day course of antibiotics that prevents the exposed patient from developing symptoms.



For more info and sign-ups for a short Pertussis 101 presentation contact Alexandria Health Department: 703.746.4951 or Alex_Epi@vdh.virginia.gov.