



FOR RELEASE  
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## **Pertussis outbreak in Yukon prompts warning**

WHITEHORSE—Yukon’s Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sharon Lazeo, is advising Yukon parents to watch for signs and symptoms of pertussis (whooping cough) in their children, following laboratory confirmation of one case in Yukon, and five cases of clinical pertussis. All five cases link back to the Yukon Native Hockey Tournament in late March.

“We can confirm that these cases are directly linked to the current pertussis outbreak in B.C. and that we have begun contact tracing for all the individuals who may have come into contact with the Yukon case and the one case in B.C.,” Lazeo said.

All those who are currently ill were either participants in the hockey tournament or are family members of participants.

Whooping cough is a very contagious disease of the lungs and throat. It is caused by a bacteria (germ) found in the mouth, nose and throat of an infected person. Whooping cough is spread when the sick person coughs or sneezes the germ into the air, where other people can breathe it in. If exposed people become infected, it takes about seven to 10 days for them to develop symptoms of whooping cough.

Early symptoms are like those of a cold (sneezing, runny nose, a low fever and a mild cough), but over the next week or two, the cough gets worse leading to longer spells of coughing that often end with a whoop or crowing sound when the person breathes in. The coughing may be so bad that it makes a person gag or throw up. Sometimes a thick, clear mucous is spit out. This cough can last up to a month or two, and happens more at night.

Lazeo says concerned parents can call 811 for more information or check with their family physician, Whitehorse Health Centre or community health centre for immunization information. Individuals who think they may have come into contact with the disease should contact their family physician, their health centre or visit the emergency department at Whitehorse General Hospital.

For more on Pertussis, view the information brochure.

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