

SUBJECT: Pertussis – Testing and Reporting
Date: November 17, 2022
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To: Primary Care Providers
From: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) was notified of a lab-confirmed case of pertussis (*B. pertussis*) in a child who attends JK/SK at Saint-René-Goupil Catholic Elementary School in Guelph. Additional information is provided in a [separate advisory](#) issued yesterday.

Parents of children in the affected classes at Saint-René-Goupil were notified yesterday that their child may have been exposed to pertussis, and parents are advised to seek care if compatible signs or symptoms develop. **These children may present to your office for assessment and testing in the coming days.**

Testing for Pertussis

Please test any patient with signs/symptoms of pertussis, particularly if they have an epi link to a known case. **This would include anyone who identifies as part of the affected JK/SK cohort at Saint-René-Goupil.**

The preferred method of testing is using nasopharyngeal swabs during the acute phase of the illness. Refer to [PHO's Test Information Sheet for Bordetella – Respiratory](#) for testing guidelines (summarized below) and ordering of appropriate specimen collection kits.

BP collection kits (#390052) have a short expiry so please ensure that your stock has not expired.

If you do not have BP collection kits AND you have a patient who requires pertussis testing, please contact WDGPH at **519-822-2715 ext. 7006** (after hours please call **1-877-884-8653**). WDGPH has a limited supply of kits and will arrange for them to be delivered to your office on the same day if possible.

Test Requested	Required Requisition	Specimen Type	Collection Kit
<i>Bordetella pertussis</i>	General Test Requisition	Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab NP aspirate Sputum (including induced), Tracheal aspirates also acceptable but NP swab and NP aspirate is preferred	Bordetella pertussis BP collection kit; Kit order # 390052

The PHO General Test Requisition should include 'Bordetella pertussis PCR' under test description. The specimen should be refrigerated between 2°C - 8°C and transported to the Public Health Ontario Laboratory as STAT.

Reporting of Pertussis

If you suspect that your patient has pertussis, please contact WDGPH immediately at **519-822-2715 ext 4752**. After hours, weekends and holidays please call 1-**877-884-8653**.

Please note that a patient who was exposed to pertussis **is considered a case** if they have any of the following signs for which there is no other known cause:

- Paroxysmal cough of any duration
- Cough with inspiratory "whoop"
- Cough ending in vomiting or gagging, or associated with apnea

Given the other respiratory pathogens currently circulating in the community, we are relying on your clinical judgment to help determine which patients may have pertussis. Please consider pertussis in any patients who:

- Have the characteristic cough features listed above;
- Have URTI symptoms lasting multiple weeks;
- Have been exposed to a pertussis case; and/or
- Are un- or underimmunized for pertussis.

For more information, please contact:

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