

DEE MARGO
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
ALEXANDRA ANNELLO, DISTRICT 2
CASSANDRA H. BROWN, DISTRICT 3
SAM MORGAN, DISTRICT 4
MICHEL R. NOE, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA ORDAZ PEREZ, DISTRICT 6
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7
CISSY LIZARRAGA, DISTRICT 8

April 10, 2018

NEWS RELEASE

Possible Whooping Cough Exposure at Local High School

Department sending letters to students, teachers, staff of Austin H.S.

EL PASO, Texas – The City of El Paso Department of Public Health is working with officials at Austin High School to notify parents, students, teachers, and staff that they may have been exposed to a student with pertussis, also known as whooping cough.

“We don’t want to create alarm or panic for anyone involved in this possible exposure, but we do want to make sure that children, their parents, and any adults affected, recognize the importance of following the recommendations mentioned in the letter,” said Robert Resendes, Public Health Director.

Letters are being sent home to parents, and health officials are asking that students take great care in making sure the letters are reviewed in detail.

The letter suggests that they contact their primary care provider to let the doctor know that they may have been exposed to pertussis and to ensure that they are up-to-date with their vaccines. A physician should see anyone with a cough. If they are diagnosed with pertussis, they will be prescribed the appropriate antibiotic therapy. Anyone diagnosed should avoid public activities including school, sporting events, etc., until completion of a 5 day course of antibiotics.

Pertussis is a highly contagious bacterial infection that is spread through the air by coughing. Pertussis begins with cold-like symptoms and a cough which become much worse over one to two weeks. Symptoms also usually include a long series of coughs (“coughing fits”) followed by a whooping noise. Intense coughing may be followed by vomiting, turning blue, or difficulty in catching one’s breath. There is generally no fever involved. The cough is often worse at night and cough medications usually do not help control the cough.

For more information on the programs and service provided by the Department of Public Health, call 2-1-1 or visit www.EPHealth.com or www.EPSalud.com.

###

Media Contact: Rick Isaías
Lead Public Affairs Coordinator
915.212.1077