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**PRESS RELEASE-For Immediate Release**

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**Public Health Identifies Cases of Pertussis (Whooping Cough) in Two Adults**

TWIN FALLS- Health officials have identified two cases of pertussis (whooping cough) in the last week. Both cases are adults who reside in Twin Falls County. For adults, cases of pertussis are easily mistaken for other types of coughing illnesses. It is important for parents to check their children's vaccination status, but also to remember that they are also at risk for the disease and should receive a pertussis booster vaccine.

"The pertussis vaccination isn't just for babies. Adolescents and adults need to be revaccinated, even if they were vaccinated as children," said Mary Jensen, SCPHD Epidemiology Manager. "Immunization is our best tool, especially for adults in contact with infants. Infants may develop severe symptoms which may lead to hospitalization or even death."

Symptoms usually develop within one to two weeks after contact with a person with pertussis. Early signs include a persistent cough that follows a cold. The cough usually occurs in explosive bursts ending with a typical high-pitched whoop as the person catches their breath. It can also cause vomiting. Between bursts of coughing, the person appears well; but the coughing attacks can continue for four to six weeks. Older children or adults may have less severe symptoms. People with a cough are contagious for three weeks if untreated and for five days after treatment has begun.

Persons experiencing symptoms of pertussis should consult their health care provider. Special tests may be done to confirm the diagnosis. Care should be taken to limit exposure to other people through good cough hygiene covering the mouth when coughing and washing hands often. Antibiotics are used to treat the disease and are also given to known contacts of the person with pertussis in an effort to control the spread of the disease.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends adults from 19 to 64 years of age and adolescents 11-18 years of age now be vaccinated with a booster for tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis

(known as the Tdap vaccine). The ACIP recommends adults receive a booster dose of Tdap vaccine against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis if they have not received a tetanus and diphtheria (Td) booster dose in ten or more years.

For more information on pertussis, please contact SCPHD Epidemiologist Manager, Mary Jensen, at 737-5969.

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