**You’ve been diagnosed with Pertussis (Whooping Cough), so now what?**

Pertussis is a respiratory illness caused by the bacteria *Bordetella pertussis*. Early symptoms can last 1-2 weeks and include a runny or stuffy nose, low-grade fever, and a mild cough. Babies may not cough but instead have life-threatening pauses in breathing, called apnea. Later symptoms of pertussis include the classic coughing fits of whooping cough and vomiting after coughing fits.

Testing: Pertussis is usually diagnosed because of a positive test that your health care provider ordered. This tells us the bacteria that causes pertussis has been detected in your respiratory tract (nose or throat).

Treatment: Pertussis is treated with antibiotics. Most patients will be prescribed a five-day course of azithromycin, but there are alternatives if you are allergic. All persons who have been diagnosed or suspected to have pertussis should remain at home and away from non-sick household members until they have completed their entire course of antibiotics. The people in your household who are not sick will be recommended to also take antibiotics to prevent pertussis infection, even if they are vaccinated. Pertussis spreads very easily to close contacts, especially within a household.

Managing Symptoms at Home: Most people with pertussis can manage their symptoms at home.

* Take antibiotics exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
* Keep your home free from things that cause coughing like
  + Smoke
  + Dust
  + Chemical fumes
* Use a clean, cool mist humidifier to loosen mucus and soothe the cough.
* Eat small meals every few hours to help prevent vomiting.
* Get plenty of fluids, including water, juices, and fruits.

**Do not take** **cough medicine** unless your health care provider recommends it.

Return to Work/School: You may return to your usual activities after completing the full course of prescribed antibiotics or 21 days from the start of cough if you did not take antibiotic treatment. .

Earliest return to Work/School Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* **If you are having difficulty breathing or other serious issues, please seek emergency medical care.**
* If you have questions about your illness, please contact your health care provider.
* If you are due or overdue for a pertussis vaccination, you should get it as soon as you are feeling well again. Contact your health care provider for an appointment for vaccination or for more information on the pertussis vaccination.