

Exposure to pertussis common in peds health care workers

December 17 2013



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In an effort to describe the epidemiology of [occupational exposures](#), Danica E. Kuncio, M.P.H, from the Yale School of Public Health in New Haven, Conn., and colleagues extracted data from [occupational health](#) (OH) and infection prevention and control (IPC) records for pertussis cases that resulted in an exposure investigation. The frequency of occupational exposures was calculated in a large quaternary pediatric care network from Jan. 1, 2002, to July 18, 2011, and associated characteristics were assessed. Electronic health record data were reviewed to identify laboratory-confirmed pertussis cases not

documented in OH or IPC records.

During the study period, the researchers identified 1,193 confirmed [health care](#) worker pertussis exposures, which were associated with 219 index cases. Of these, 38.8 percent were infants aged younger than 6 months and seven cases were [health care workers](#). The majority of exposures (77.5 percent) occurred in an ambulatory site or in the emergency department. More than one-quarter (27 percent) of exposures occurred after documented IPC precaution initiation. Electronic health record review identified 450 laboratory-confirmed pertussis cases, of which about half (49.8 percent) had no OH or IPC investigation, with most uninvestigated cases (77.2 percent) from ambulatory sites.

"Occupational exposures to pertussis occur frequently in pediatric health care settings despite appropriate IPC guidelines," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to Pfizer and Abbott Laboratories.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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Citation: Exposure to pertussis common in peds health care workers (2013, December 17)
retrieved 5 May 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-12-exposure-pertussis-common-peds-health.html>

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