

# Pertussis epidemic reported in California

June 16 2014

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(HealthDay)—More than 3,400 new cases of pertussis were reported in California between January 1 and June 10, which means the outbreak is officially an epidemic, according to the state's department of health.

There have been about 350 new cases of [pertussis](#) so far this year in Los Angeles County. Long Beach has been hit particularly hard, with more than 90 new cases of the bacterial disease and an infection rate of nearly 20 cases per 100,000 people, *NBC News reported*.

Two-thirds of the people hospitalized with pertussis have been children 4 months or younger, and two [infant deaths](#) have been reported, according to the health department.

"Preventing severe disease and death in infants is our highest priority," said Ron Chapman, M.D., M.P.H., director of the health department, in a news release, *NBC News reported*. "We urge all [pregnant women](#) to get

vaccinated. We also urge parents to vaccinate infants as soon as possible."

**More information:** [Health Highlights: June 16, 2014](#)

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