

Four children die in Serbia whooping cough outbreak

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At least four children have died in a whooping cough outbreak in the Serbian capital Belgrade, state media said Wednesday, with doctors blaming falling vaccinations for the spread.

A fifth child is in a [critical condition](#) after contracting the respiratory illness, Vladislav Vukomanovic, the deputy head of a Belgrade pediatric hospital, told broadcaster RTS.

The doctor said around 70 children have been diagnosed, with two-thirds requiring hospitalization.

Vukomanovic blamed a lack of vaccination, including among older adults, for the current spread.

Vaccination against whooping cough is mandatory in Serbia. However, a rising number of parents are refusing to vaccinate their children, leading to periodic outbreaks across the region.

Neighboring Croatia has also struggled to contain a whooping cough epidemic that [health officials](#) said resulted in a drop in inoculation rates linked to the anti-vaccine movement.

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