Pertussis

Merlin disease code: 03390 Pertussis

Paper case report form
Merlin extended data required

Clinical criteria for case classification

Confirmatory:
Both of the following in the absence of a more likely diagnosis;

- Cough illness lasting ≥2 weeks;
- **And** one or more of the following:
    - Paroxysms of coughing,
    - **Or** inspiratory "whoop",
    - **Or** posttussive vomiting,
    - **Or** apnea, with or without cyanosis.

Presumptive:
Both of the following:

- Acute cough illness of any duration
- **And** one or more of the following:
    - Paroxysms of coughing,
    - **Or** inspiratory "whoop",
    - **Or** posttussive vomiting,
    - **Or** apnea, with or without cyanosis.

Supportive:
Acute cough illness of any duration.

Laboratory criteria for case classification

Either of the following:

- Isolation of *Bordetella pertussis* by culture from clinical specimen.
- Positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) for *B. pertussis*.

Epidemiological criteria for case classification

A person who is epidemiologically linked to a confirmed pertussis case.

Case classification

Confirmed:
A person with confirmatory, presumptive, or supportive clinical criteria and laboratory criteria.

Probable:
Either of the following:

- A person with confirmatory clinical criteria
- **Or** a person with presumptive clinical criteria and epidemiological criteria.

Criteria to distinguish a new case from previous reports

Not applicable.

Comments

The clinical criteria above are appropriate for endemic or sporadic cases. In outbreak settings, a probable case may be defined as a cough illness lasting ≥2 weeks (as reported by a health professional). Because direct fluorescent antibody testing of nasopharyngeal secretions has been demonstrated in some studies to have low sensitivity and variable specificity,[1,2] such testing should not be relied on as a criterion for laboratory confirmation. Serologic testing (IgM and IgG) for pertussis is available in some areas but is not standardized and, therefore, should not be relied on as a criterion for laboratory confirmation.