

# Pertussis Surveillance

## January-August 2020

### Key Points



In August, there was one case



99 new cases between March and August 2020



No outbreaks have occurred in 2020

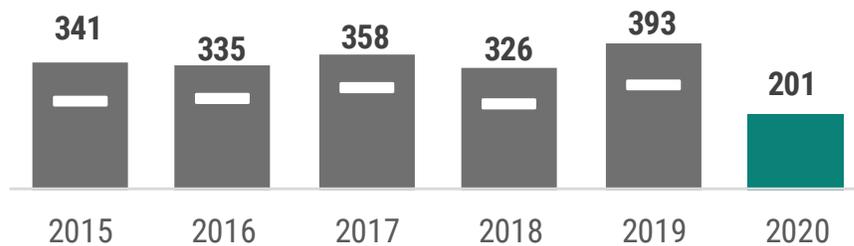


The average 6 month incidence rate was highest among <1 year olds



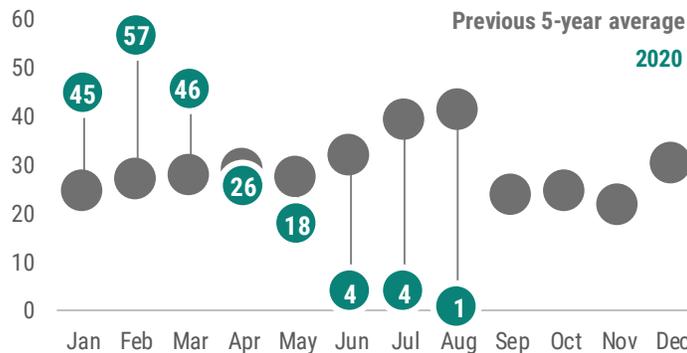
From January 1, 2020 through August 31, 2020, **201 pertussis cases** were reported in **38 counties**.

Ninety-nine pertussis cases were reported between March and August 2020, which is a **56% decrease** compared to March to August 2019 (227 cases).

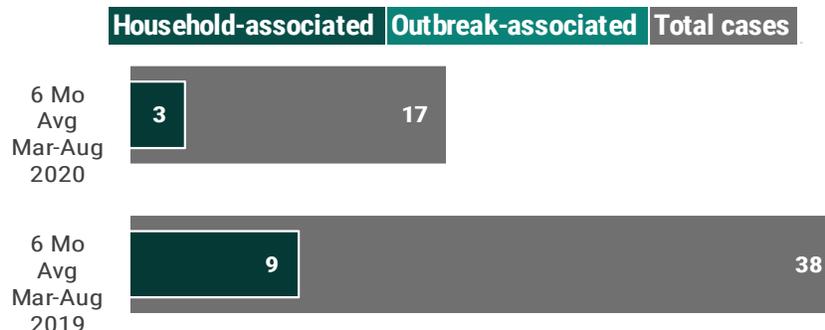


\*The white bars in the graph indicates total numbers in August for each year

**The number of pertussis cases reported in August decreased from the previous month and was below the previous 5-year average.** Elevated case counts in early 2020 may be due to a change in the case definition for pertussis; please see the last page for more information.



The average number of **household-associated cases** between March and August 2020 was **three times lower** than the average number of **household-associated cases** between March and August in 2019. **No outbreak-associated cases have been identified in 2020.** For most pertussis cases, exposure to other known cases is never identified, and they are not able to be linked to outbreaks.



The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting health care seeking behavior, which may be impacting the diagnosis and reporting of pertussis cases that are shown in this report. For more information on the COVID-19 pandemic in Florida, please visit [FloridaHealthCOVID-19.gov](https://www.floridahealth.gov/covid-19).

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There was an average of **3 contacts** per case between March and August 2020. Between March and August 2019, there was an average of **4 contacts** per case. Contacts are classified as people whom antibiotics were recommended to in order to prevent illness. For those diagnosed with pertussis, antibiotics can shorten the amount of time they are contagious to others. Antibiotics can also be used to prevent illness in those who have been exposed to someone with pertussis while they are contagious.



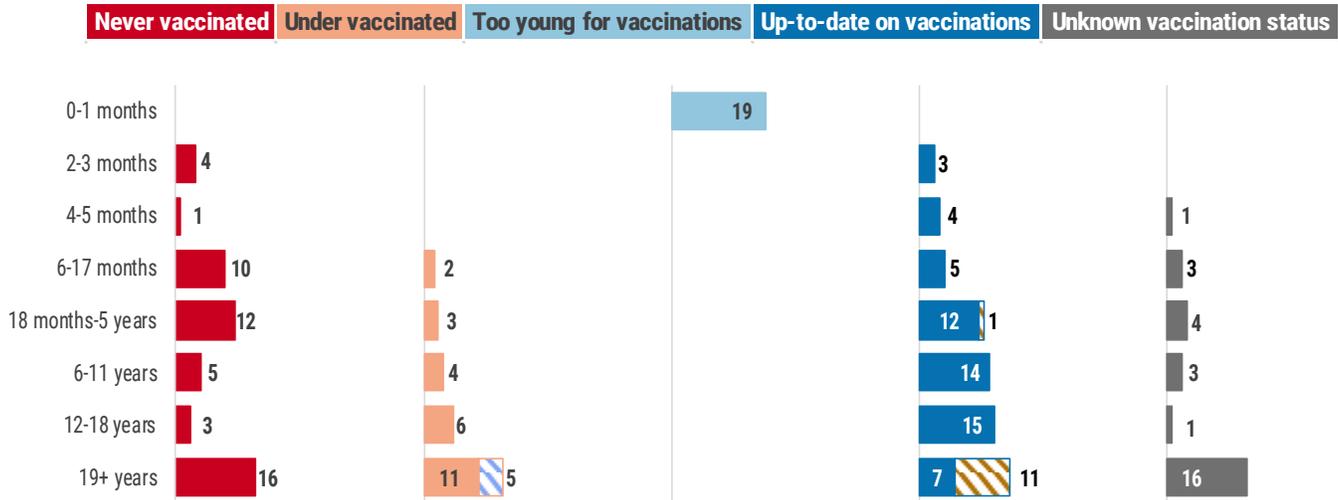
The average incidence rate was highest among **<1 year olds** at **1.5 cases** per 100,000 population between March and August 2020, which is roughly **three times lower** than the average incidence rate for <1 year olds between March and August 2019. Infants experience the greatest burden of pertussis infections, not only in number of cases but also in severity. Infants <2 months old are too young to receive vaccinations against pertussis, which is why vaccination of parents, siblings, grandparents, and other age groups is so important to help prevent infection in infants.



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In 2020, the majority of adults aged 19 years and older with pertussis were not up-to-date on their pertussis vaccinations or had unknown vaccination status. **In general, those who have received at least one pertussis vaccination have less severe outcomes than those who have never been vaccinated.** Self-reported vaccination status that could not be verified is shown with a diagonal pattern.



### National activity

The number of pertussis cases gradually increased since the 1980s, peaking in 2012 at levels not seen since the 1950s. Since 2012, the number of pertussis cases started gradually decreasing. Pertussis incidence has remained highest among infants <1 year old and lowest among adults ≥20 years old since the 1990s.

### Pertussis surveillance goals

- Identify cases to limit transmission in settings with infants or others who may transmit pertussis to infants
- Identify and prevent outbreaks
- Identify contacts of cases and recommend appropriate prevention measures, including exclusion, antibiotic prophylaxis, and immunization
- Monitor the effectiveness of immunization programs and vaccines

To learn more about pertussis, please visit [FloridaHealth.gov/Pertussis](https://www.floridahealth.gov/Pertussis). For more information on the data sources used in Florida for pertussis surveillance, see the last page of this report.