

Pertussis Surveillance

Key Points



3 cases in February 2021



20 cases in the past 6 months



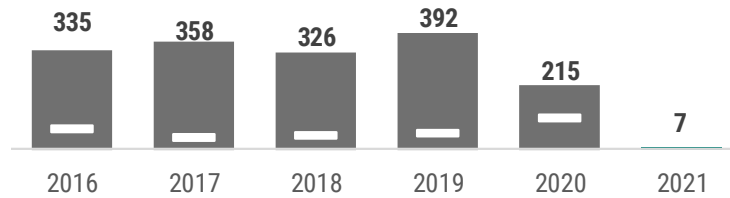
No outbreaks have been reported in 2021



<1 year olds had the highest 6 month average incidence rate



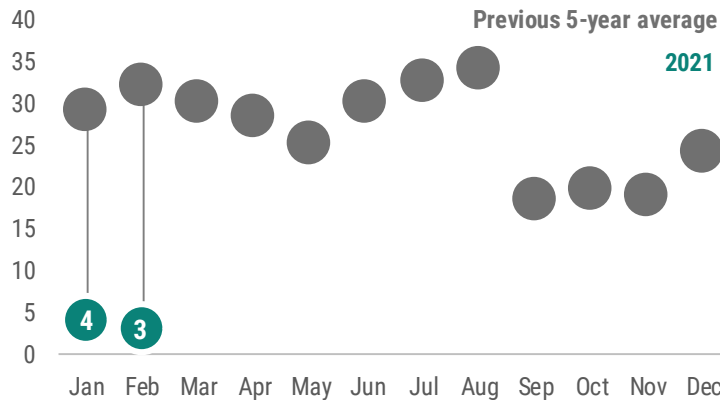
In 2021, 7 pertussis cases were reported in 5 counties. Between September 2020 and February 2021, 20 cases were reported, an 87% decrease compared to September 2018 to February 2019 (n=152 cases).



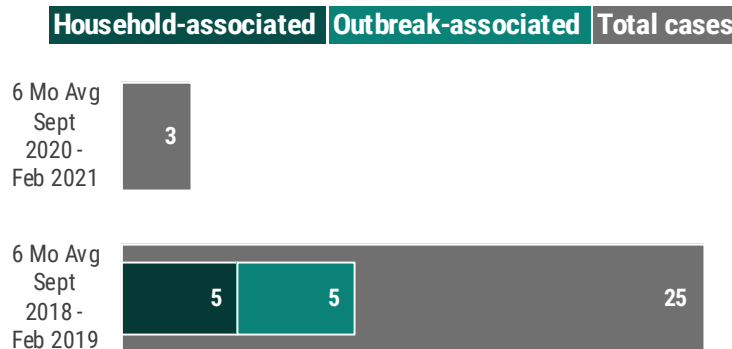
*The white bars indicate the total number of cases as of February for each year



The number of pertussis cases reported in February 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.



No outbreak-associated or household-associated cases have been identified in 2021. For most pertussis cases, exposure to other known cases is not identified and 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).



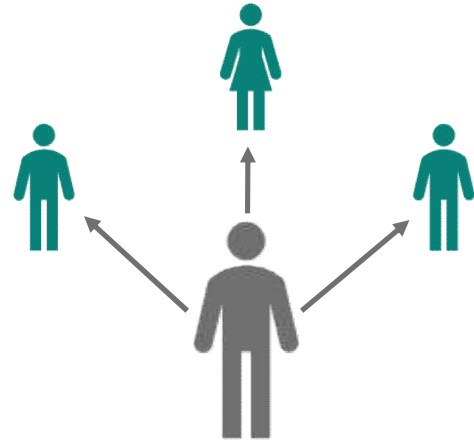
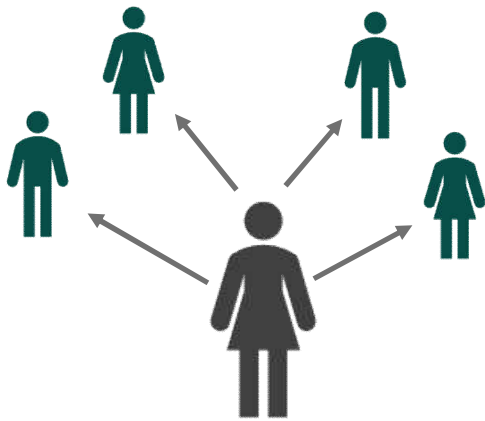
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An average of **3 contacts** per case between September 2020 and February 2021 were reported compared to an average of **4 contacts** per case between September 2018 and February 2019. Contacts are classified as people whom antibiotics were recommended to prevent illness. Antibiotics can shorten the amount of time cases are contagious and can also be used to prevent illness in those exposed. Understanding pertussis transmission is a key factor in decreasing pertussis infections. In Florida, transmission setting is not routinely identified for non-outbreak cases, resulting in 74% of cases reporting unknown setting in the past six months.

September 2018 to February 2019

September 2020 to February 2021



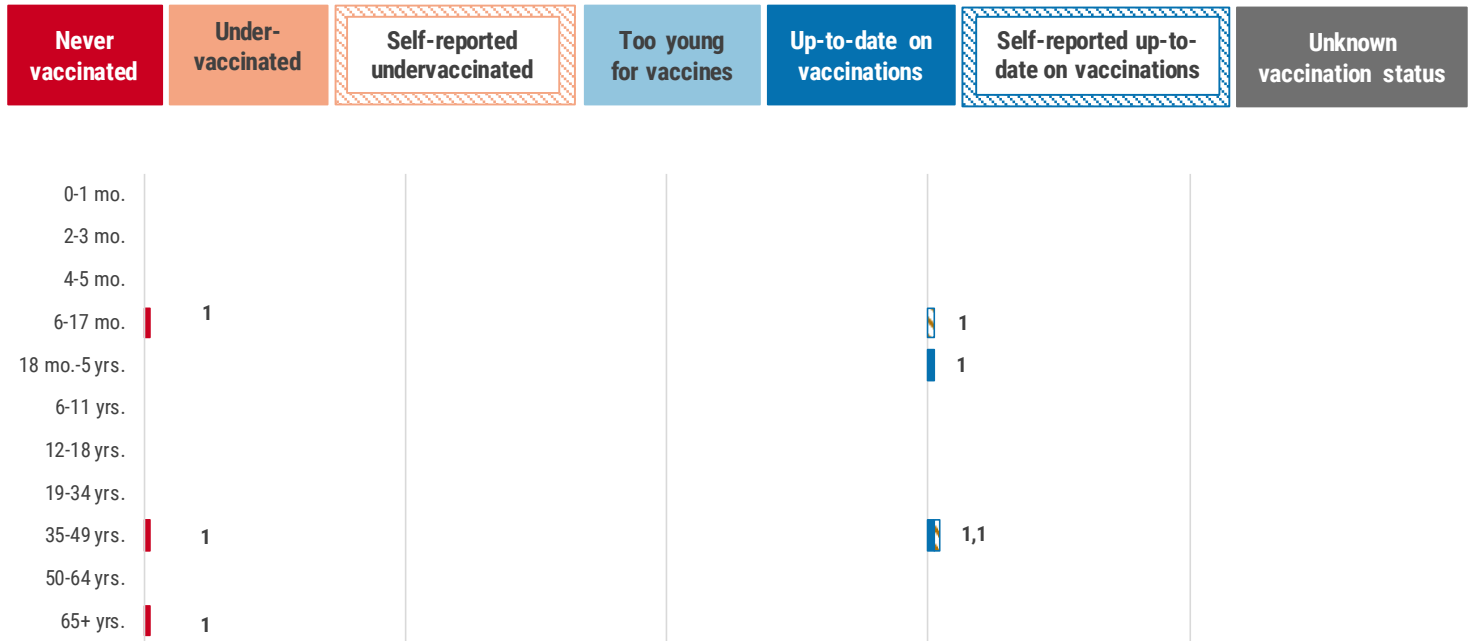
The average incidence rate was highest among **<1 year olds** at **0.2 cases** per 100,000 population between September 2020 and February 2021, which is roughly **12 times lower** than the average incidence rate for <1 year olds between September 2018 and February 2019. Infants experience the greatest 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 important in infection prevention among infants.



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In 2021, over half of cases were up-to-date on their pertussis vaccinations. **In general, those who have received at least one pertussis vaccination have less severe outcomes than those who have never been vaccinated.** If a person was born before November 1st, 1982, the current pertussis immunization recommendation would not have been implemented when they were receiving their childhood immunizations. Based on the case's age, **4 cases** would not have been vaccinated under the current childhood immunization recommendations.



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 transmission settings in non-outbreak cases to prevent the spread of sporadic cases
- 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