

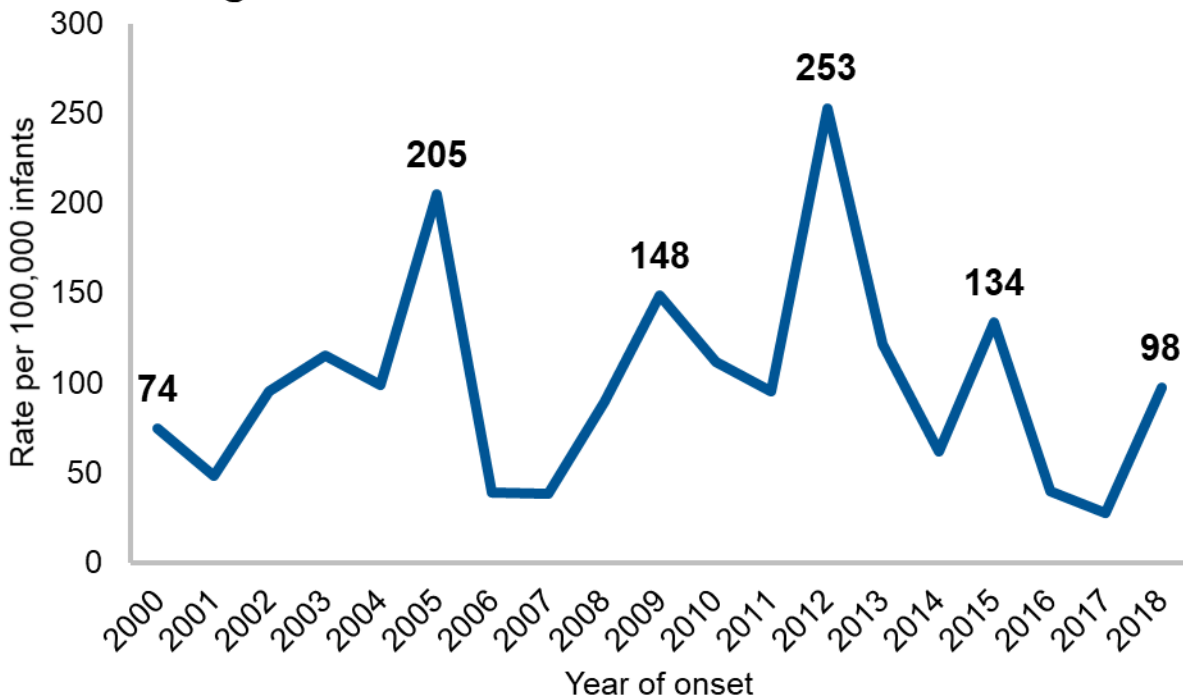
## Communicable Disease Control

# Pertussis (whooping cough) among infants

Pertussis is an endemic disease with peaks occurring every three to five years. Among infants in Oregon, peaks occurred in 2005, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018 (Figure 1). Infants have the highest reported incidence of pertussis and are most likely to have severe cases, resulting in hospitalization, intensive care, and sometimes death.

FIGURE 1

**Pertussis among infants < 1 year old by year, Oregon**



Source: Orpheus - Oregon Reportable Diseases Database

Pertussis is the only vaccine-preventable disease that has proved painfully persistent despite widespread childhood immunization and use of antibiotics. Vaccination is recommended for infants at 2, 4, and 6 months of age. Infants younger than 6 months are therefore incompletely vaccinated. Vaccination of women during

each pregnancy is recommended so that they can develop antibodies against pertussis that are transferred across the placenta to their babies in the womb. This gives even very young infants some protection against pertussis.

**Additional Resources:** [Pertussis \(whooping cough\) disease details](#)

**About the Data:** Data source is the Oregon reportable diseases database known as “Orpheus.” Data include confirmed and presumptive cases of pertussis among infants.

Confirmed: Culture-positive and an acute cough illness of any duration *or* PCR-positive and a cough illness lasting at least 2 weeks *with* any of the following: paroxysms of coughing, inspiratory “whoop”, post-tussive vomiting or apnea (for infants only).

Presumptive: Linked epidemiologically to a confirmed case *and* a cough illness lasting at least 2 weeks with any of the following: paroxysms of coughing, inspiratory “whoop”, post-tussive vomiting or apnea (for infants only).

**For More Information Contact:** [ohd.acdp@state.or.us](mailto:ohd.acdp@state.or.us); 971-673-1111

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[Oregon State Health Profile](#)

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