

This is a highly infectious bacterial disease characterised by a strange 'whoop' sound upon coughing.

What to look for

- a runny nose, cough, mild fever and loss of appetite.
- conjunctivitis
- spasms of coughing - with the characteristic 'whoop' at the end.
- vomiting after coughing episodes.

Whooping cough or pertussis, is a highly contagious and potentially dangerous respiratory infection. It should always be treated by a conventional doctor. If left untreated, it can cause lung damage and recurrent bronchial infections, brain damage or death.

Causes

Whooping cough is caused by bacteria. It is spread by droplets of water sneezed or coughed by the sufferer.

Traditional Treatment

You must go to a doctor and receive treatment for this as soon as possible. Any delay could be very dangerous.

Personal Care

- Ensure plenty of fluids are taken in to avoid dehydration.
- Keep your child away from cigarette smoke.
- Make your child sit up while having coughing fits as this can help the passages.

Prevention

Always have your children immunised against this disease - it is commonplace these days.

When to seek further professional advice

- your child has not been vaccinated against whooping cough and has recently been exposed to the illness.
- or if your child has this illness and is experiencing problems with breathing.