

Whooping Cough Warning from National Health Services December 2023

Health experts have issued yet another warning after more cases of the highly contagious '100 day cough' were detected in the UK.

Whooping cough – scientifically known as pertussis – can easily be mistaken for a common cold, but its symptoms can last months.

The bacterial infection often begins with a runny nose and sore throat, before persistent coughs that make a 'whoop' sound take over, lasting weeks or months.

Cases of the contagious cough were reported in Britain earlier this month, but new reports in Devon and Cornwall have now been released.

716 cases have been reported in the last five months, a whopping 230% higher than this time last year. The London borough of Hackney has seen the most cases by far, at 77, followed by Wirral with 35, and Birmingham and Leeds with 30 each – prompting doctors to issue a warning to pregnant women.

After about a week of a runny nose and sore throat, patients often suffer:

- coughing bouts that last for a few minutes and are worse at night
- a 'whoop' sound – a gasp for breath between coughs
- difficulty breathing after a coughing bout and young infants may turn blue or grey
- a thick mucus, which can make you vomit
- becoming very red in the face (more common in adults)

Whooping cough can be treated with antibiotics, but not all symptoms may improve.

Dr Manal Mohammed, infectious diseases professor at Westminster University, told Metro.co.uk: 'Anyone can be infected if they inhale the bacteria, but the main people who are under risk are children and pregnant women.'

'Most of us, if we have a strong immune system, can cope. But it's very important that we ensure children get the vaccine, and pregnant women get vaccinated.'

The cough has been spreading in Europe, as well – lines to get tested for whooping cough were seen outside a health institute in Zagreb, Croatia.

According to [the NHS](#), whooping cough can make young babies very unwell, and in severe cases they can die.

Related video: How to spot the signs and symptoms of Norovirus as cases rise across UK (Dailymotion)