



## Whooping Cough Cases: Specialist Urges Parents to Closely Monitor Symptoms in Children

- **Dr. Silvia Giono Cerezo recommends careful monitoring of symptoms to ensure immediate action and timely medical attention while avoiding self-medication.**
- **The disease can last up to three months, which is why it is known in Japan as the "100-Day Disease."**

To prevent the rise of whooping cough outbreaks in Mexico and protect the most vulnerable population, especially infants under six months old, parents are advised to provide prompt attention to ensure appropriate treatment, closely monitor symptoms and prevent complications.

Dr. Silvia Giono Cerezo, a microbiology specialist at the Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN), explained that the disease progresses in three stages: catarrhal, paroxysmal, and convalescent. It lasts approximately three months and is referred to in Japan as the "100-Day Disease." Early diagnosis is ideal, as recovering and cultivating the bacteria becomes more challenging in later stages, she noted.

She pointed out that the severity of the infection, caused by the *Bordetella pertussis* bacteria, lies in the fact that symptoms in infants under one year old are not always apparent. During the initial (catarrhal) stage, the disease presents as a severe cold with clear nasal discharge (rhinorrhea hialina) and mild coughing.

At the first sign of this highly contagious respiratory infection, Dr. Giono Cerezo urged parents to seek medical attention immediately, ensuring that a healthcare professional prescribes the appropriate antibiotic treatment, which can improve the disease's progression. She also emphasized the importance of avoiding self-medication.

Given the increase in cases, Dr. Giono Cerezo stressed the importance of administering the hexavalent vaccine and the necessary booster shots to young children, as well as ensuring that unvaccinated adults receive immunization.





The vaccination schedule includes four doses of the hexavalent vaccine (which protects against diphtheria, whooping cough, Haemophilus influenzae type B, tetanus, polio, and hepatitis B) at two, four, six, and 18 months of age, along with a booster at four years old. The IPN researcher urged timely administration to achieve immunity and reduce the number of cases.

She noted that the second stage of whooping cough, known as the paroxysmal phase, is severe. The persistent nighttime coughing can cause infants to turn bluish, experience seizures, and emit a high-pitched "whoop" sound. This respiratory condition may lead to complications, such as pneumonia, due to a secondary infection unrelated to Bordetella pertussis.

Dr. Giono Cerezo explained that the bacteria responsible for whooping cough produces a potent toxin (pertussis toxin) and other compounds that allow it to adhere to respiratory epithelial cells, triggering symptoms in the paroxysmal stage. Additionally, it damages the respiratory cilia (tiny hair-like structures lining the airways), facilitating bacterial attachment. During this stage, blood sugar levels may drop, and white blood cell counts may increase, a phenomenon known as lymphocytosis.

In the final convalescent stage, symptoms gradually subside but may persist for one to two months, particularly coughing, which can intensify with physical exertion or other illnesses.

**For more information, visit [www.ipn.mx](http://www.ipn.mx)**

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