

Azithromycin

an antibiotic for contacts of a person with pertussis (whooping cough)

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease of the respiratory tract (nose and throat) caused by the bacteria *Bordetella pertussis*.

Preventive Antibiotic Treatment

Vaccination against pertussis helps prevent individuals getting the disease but does not prevent them carrying the bacteria in their nasal passage. This means that people, even if fully vaccinated, can carry the infection and pass it on to other people.

For people exposed to someone with pertussis a course of antibiotics can prevent them developing the illness or carrying the infection and so help decrease any spread to others.

Antibiotics are recommended for close contacts of individuals with pertussis. These contacts include household members and other people in settings where there are individuals at high risk of the disease.

Dosage of azithromycin

One of the recommended antibiotics is azithromycin. For preventive treatment against pertussis, azithromycin should be taken once per day for 5 days.

Azithromycin can be taken before, with or after food. It is important not to take it 2-3 hours before or after taking antacids.

Side Effects of azithromycin

While not frequent, some people may experience side effects usually: diarrhoea, nausea, or abdominal pain. Headache, shortness of breath, rash or candidal infections can occur more rarely.

Interaction with other medications

Azithromycin can interfere with the activity of some other important prescription drugs.

It is important to inform the person prescribing you azithromycin of **any other medications** you are taking.

Contra-indications

Please advise if you are likely to be pregnant or if you are breastfeeding as further discussion would be required.

For more information contact your nearest Centre for Disease Control.

Darwin	8922 8044
Katherine	8973 9049
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Tennant Creek	8962 4259
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