Pertussis is a disease which can be accompanied by serious complications and death, particularly in young children. Bronchopneumonia and other pulmonary infections are the leading complications of whooping cough.

Localized outbreaks have been reported in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region. In 2010, 6286 cases of pertussis were reported in the Region. Of these cases, 73% were reported in Yemen (2534) and Iraq (2034). The remaining cases were reported in Somalia (665), Islamic Republic of Iran (464), Sudan (209), Pakistan (109), United Arab Emirates (79), Syrian Arab Republic (70), Kuwait (41), Oman (32), Lebanon (19), Morocco (15), Qatar (11) and Tunisia (4).

In 2008, pertussis or whooping cough caused an estimated 18 903 deaths in countries of the Region. It contributed to about 2% of deaths in children under five years of age.

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