



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Public Health Division

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To: All Healthcare Providers in Santa Cruz County
From: Arnold S. Leff, MD, REHS, County Public Health Officer
Subject: Measles Outbreak in Washington and Oregon
Date: January 30, 2019

A large measles outbreak is occurring in Washington state and Oregon. From January 1-28, 2019, there have been 35 confirmed cases of measles in Clark County, WA. Children aged 1-10 years comprise 25 of these cases while 9 cases are aged 11-18 years. Importantly, 89% (31) of the cases are unimmunized for measles and 4 cases have unverified immunization status. Two additional cases linked to Clark County have been confirmed in King County, WA and Multnomah County, OR. Local health departments in each county are conducting contact investigations with support from the Washington State Department of Health.

Measles is a highly contagious and potentially serious illness caused by a virus. The virus can linger in the air for up to two hours after an infectious person has left. Airborne transmission can easily occur in congregate settings like healthcare facilities, schools, childcares, shopping centers, public transportation, airports, and amusement parks. Clinicians should be vigilant in identifying and managing suspected measles cases to avoid ongoing transmission. It is also very important to ensure that patients and staff are up-to-date with immunizations.

Clinicians are requested to:

- 1. Consider/suspect measles** in patients with a rash and fever $\geq 101^{\circ}\text{F}$ (38.3°C) regardless of travel history. Ask about measles vaccination and exposure to known measles cases, recent travel (international or to affected states), or international visitors in the 3 weeks prior to illness.
- 2. Prepare your facility for the possibility of measles patients.** Ask patients to call ahead first if they have fever and rash. [Post signage \(http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-908.pdf\)](http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-908.pdf) that directs patients with fever and rash to notify staff. Train staff to immediately implement airborne precautions if measles is suspected.
 - Mask and isolate the patient in an airborne isolation room
 - Permit only staff immune to measles to be near the patient. Staff should use N95 respirators, if available.
 - Do not re-use exam room for at least one hour after the patient has left the room
 - Assure airborne precautions at other healthcare facilities if referring the patient
- 3. Report suspected measles cases immediately to the Santa Cruz Public Health Communicable Disease Unit (CDU) by phone at 831-454-4114 before you send the patient home;** after hours or on weekends, contact 831-471-1170 and ask for the Health Officer on-call. **CALL, DO NOT FAX.**
- 4. Test suspected measles cases in consultation with County, CDU.** Testing should be done by a public health lab to ensure rapid and accurate results.
 - Collect a throat swab (for measles PCR) with a Dacron swab and place in Viral Transport Media
 - Collect a urine specimen (for measles PCR) in any container (does not need to be sterile)
 - Draw blood (for measles IgM and IgG) if and only if it is already Day 4 or later after rash onset
 - Collecting specimens while the patient is at your facility will prevent delays in confirmation and limit the potential for additional healthcare visits/exposures.
 - Please HOLD specimens for testing by Public Health.
- 5. Advise patients with suspected measles to stay home with no visitors** until at least 4 days after rash onset and/or until cleared by the CDU to resume normal activities. Patients should go home by private vehicle, not public transportation or a rideshare (e.g. Uber, Lyft).
- 6. Confirm immunity of health care staff** with unknown vaccination status by ordering Measles IgG only. *Confirm staff immunity now to avoid staff exclusion from work in the event of an exposure.*
- 7. Vaccinate children and non-immune adults,** unless contraindicated, according to national guidelines.

Additional measles resources:

- Contact the Communicable Disease Unit at 831-454-4114 (Monday-Friday 8AM-5PM) and 831-471-1170 (after hours and weekends).
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC): www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp
- California Department of Public Health:
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/measles.aspx>
- Washington State Measles Outbreak 2019 updates:
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Measles/MeaslesOutbreak>

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.



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