

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: April 3, 2019

END DATE: April 30, 2019

CONTACT: Dr. Gary K. Johnson, MD, MPH
Medical Director

PHONE: (810) 257-3155

RE: **Measles**

Southeast Michigan is currently experiencing a measles outbreak with 33 cases in Oakland County and one case in Wayne County. Infected individuals in Oakland and Wayne Counties range in age from 8 months to 63 years. **There are currently no measles cases in Genesee County.** To help prevent further spread of the disease, the Genesee County Health Department (GCHD) is urging residents to make sure they are up-to-date on their vaccinations.

Measles is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable disease that can have lifelong health complications. Measles is spread by direct person-to-person contact and through the air when an infected person breathes coughs or sneezes. The virus can live up to two hours in the air where an infected person was present. It is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of the people close to that person will also get the disease unless they are vaccinated or immune. A person is considered immune if they have had the disease, been vaccinated or born before 1957.

Symptoms of measles usually begin 7-14 days after exposure, but can appear up to 21 days after exposure and may include:

- High fever (may spike to over 104°F)
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Tiny white spots on the inner cheeks, gums, and roof of the mouth (Koplik Spots) 2-3 days after symptoms begin.



- A rash that is red, raised, blotchy; usually starts on face, spreads to trunk, arms, and legs 3-5 days after symptoms begin.

Infected individuals are contagious from four days before the rash appears until four to five days after the rash appears.

Those at highest risk for severe illness and complications from measles include:

- Infants and children younger than 5 years
- Adults 20 years and over
- Pregnant women
- Those with compromised immune systems

Vaccination is the best defense against measles. One dose of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is approximately 95% effective at preventing measles and two doses are approximately 97% effective. In those rare instances when a vaccinated individual gets the disease, they will experience much milder symptoms and will be much less likely to spread the disease. The MMR vaccine requires two doses. The first should be given to children between 12 and 15 months of age with a second dose given between ages 4 and 6 years. Infants 6 to 11 months old are recommended to receive a dose of MMR prior to traveling internationally. The vaccine is effective within 72-hours of exposure to prevent illness. You cannot get measles from the vaccine.

Vaccination can occur through your personal physician or the Immunization Clinic (810-237-4540) at the GCHD Burton Branch. Fact sheets, immunization office hours at the Health Department's Burton Clinic, and additional information can be found at www.gchd.us. For more information about measles, visit www.CDC.gov/measles. For more information about Michigan's current measles outbreak, visit www.Michigan.gov/MeaslesOutbreak.

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