

Health Advisory: Travel-Associated Measles - MN at Risk for More

Minnesota Department of Health, Wed, Feb 7, 13:00 CST 2024

Action Steps

Local and tribal health department: Please forward to hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, emergency departments, and convenience clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospitals, clinics and other facilities: Please forward to family physicians, pediatricians, infection preventionists, primary care clinicians, infectious disease doctors, and emergency department staff.

Health care providers:

Measles: Recognize, Report and Test

- Consider measles in patients presenting with rash, fever, and cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis. This is especially important among individuals with recent international travel or contact with persons returning from international travel.
- Isolate suspected measles cases in the health care setting. Refer to [Minimize Measles Transmission in Health Care Settings](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/minimize.html) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/minimize.html).
- Collect specimens as soon as possible after rash onset and obtain specimens for PCR testing. Refer to [Lab Testing for Measles at MDH Public Health Laboratory](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/labtesting.html) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/labtesting.html).
- Report suspected and confirmed cases to MDH at 651-201-5414 or 1-877-676-5414 (toll-free).

MMR Vaccine: Assess and Promote

- Recognize that the percentage of 2-year-olds in MN who had received at least one dose of MMR vaccine by 24 months has declined from 83.8% in 2019 (pre-pandemic) to 78.7% in 2023.
- Assess MMR vaccination status of patients at every visit and vaccinate susceptible persons according to routine MMR recommendations - especially among those traveling internationally.
- Partner with the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) to take part in a new texting initiative to remind or recall patients in need of MMR vaccine. Email health.miictexting@state.mn.us to signup or get more information about the program.

Situation Summary

A laboratory-confirmed measles case has been identified in a hospitalized 16-month-old resident of Dakota County who recently returned to the U.S. after international travel. The child had not received any doses of MMR vaccine. The case was not infectious during travel.

Measles was laboratory confirmed by PCR at the Minnesota Department of Health's Public Health Laboratory (MDH-PHL) on February 6, 2024. Exposures primarily occurred within the family and at one health care facility in Hennepin County. Exposed individuals are being notified and given information about how to obtain post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), if indicated. Susceptible persons who did not get PEP will be asked to exclude themselves from high-risk settings for 21 days following exposure.

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A total of 58 measles cases were reported throughout the United States in 2023, with an additional nine cases reported already in 2024 ([Stay Alert for Measles Cases: CDC Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity \(COCA\)](https://emergency.cdc.gov/newsletters/coca/2024/012524.html) (<https://emergency.cdc.gov/newsletters/coca/2024/012524.html>)).

As recently as 2022 Minnesota had a total of 22 cases of measles that were all related to international travel, all unvaccinated, with 10 individuals requiring hospitalization. National and international trends, coupled with the decreasing rates of MMR vaccine in MN, put us at risk for additional cases or even an outbreak of measles.

It is important to **assess MMR vaccine at every clinic visit** and to recall those who have previously refused MMR vaccine for their child. The current measles situation is an opportunity to restart conversations with patients about the importance of vaccination. Many parents just need reassurance that the MMR vaccine is safe and will protect their child. For parents or patients who decline MMR for themselves or their children, counsel them that they could be excluded from childcare/school/work for 21 days or longer if exposed to measles.

For More Information

- [MDH Measles Information for Health Professionals](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/index.html)
(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/index.html)
Additional information and provider palm cards on recognizing and reporting measles and links to other measles related materials and posters.
- [CDC: Measles: Plan for Travel](http://www.cdc.gov/measles/plan-for-travel.html) (www.cdc.gov/measles/plan-for-travel.html)
Measles and travel.
- [CDC: Talking to Parents about Vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/conv-materials.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/conv-materials.html>)
- [MDH: Using Client Follow-up in MIIC](http://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/train/followup.html)
(www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/train/followup.html)

A copy of this HAN is available at: [MDH Health Alert Network](http://www.health.state.mn.us/han) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/han>)

The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.