

With the current outbreak of measles in three Oregon counties, we want to be sure to remain in good communication with the parents and guardians of the children in our schools, so that we may keep them as safe as possible. The following are important points to keep in mind in preparation for this school year:

Measles is one of the world's most contagious diseases. If a case is confirmed in a school, staff and student vaccination records will be reviewed to determine the risk of further spread.

While keeping children in school is a priority, the risk of harm from this serious disease takes precedence. **An unvaccinated child who is exposed to measles will not be allowed to go to school during the time period when they could become sick, which is usually 21 days after exposure.** This exclusion may be extended if there are more measles cases.

Persons excluded from school following measles exposure are asked to stay home to avoid exposing others in the community.

Now is the perfect time for all families to review their vaccine records and get their vaccines up to date. Two doses of MMR vaccine are approximately 97% effective at preventing measles. One dose is about 93% effective. First doses are given between 12-15 months of age, second dose is given between ages 4-6 years.

About Measles:

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that can spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Persons may become sick by breathing contaminated air, and the virus can live for up to 2 hours in an airspace. It may also be spread when touching surfaces contaminated with saliva or nasal discharge from someone sick with measles.

An infected person can spread the disease from four days prior to the rash's appearance, through four days following when the rash first appeared.

Common signs and symptoms that may be present in a measles case:

High fever, often over 104° F, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. A red rash usually appears 3-5 days after initial symptoms, beginning on the head or face and spreading to the rest of the body.

After a person who is not immune is exposed to measles, symptoms usually develop in 1 to 2 weeks, but it can take up to 3 weeks.

Anyone who is not immune to measles and believes they have measles symptoms should contact their health care provider or urgent care by telephone before going to the E.R., urgent care, or clinic to make arrangements to avoid exposing others to the virus.

Complications of measles include ear infection, lung infection, and in rare cases, inflammation of the brain. Roughly 1 in 5 people who get measles will be hospitalized, and about 1 in 1,000 children dies of measles.

Once again, for measles prevention: Two doses of MMR vaccine are approximately 97% effective at preventing measles. One dose is about 93% effective. First doses are given between 12-15 months of age, second dose is given between ages 4-6 years.

You are considered immune to measles if any of the following are true:

- You are a pre-school age child with one measles vaccine (MMR: measles, mumps, rubella).
- You are a school-aged child or college student who has received 2 doses of MMR.
- You are a healthcare worker who has had 2 doses of MMR.
- You were born before 1957.
- You have had the measles, diagnosed by a health care provider and confirmed with a lab test.
- You have had a blood test that shows you are immune to measles.

Up-to-date information on the current outbreak and further information on measles can be found on the OHA website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/measles.aspx>