

1/16/2019

*\* NOTICE: This health alert provides written guidance for health care professionals and others who may need to take action to prevent or control a notifiable condition. It is not intended to provide guidance for the general public.*

## Confirmed measles cases in Clark County

### Background

Clark County Public Health is investigating three confirmed cases of measles and 11 suspected cases, all among children. At this time, it's unclear whether these cases are connected to each other. This is an ongoing outbreak investigation.

### Actions Requested

- Consider measles in patients who:
  - Present with febrile rash illness and the "three Cs": cough, coryza (runny nose) or conjunctivitis (pink eye).
  - Are unimmunized or under-immunized.
  - Recently traveled to Clark County or internationally, or were exposed to someone with confirmed measles.
- If you suspect measles mask and isolate the patient; refer to the steps on the **attached Suspect Measles Worksheet**; and recommend social isolation.
- Report suspected cases of measles immediately, do not wait for lab confirmation.
- Encourage all of your patients to get fully immunized against measles.

### About measles

Measles is a highly contagious and potentially serious illness caused by a virus. It is spread through the air after a person with measles coughs or sneezes. A person with measles can spread the virus before they show symptoms. The virus also can linger in the air after someone who is infectious has left.

Immunization is the best protection against measles. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one dose of the measles vaccine is about 93% effective at preventing measles and two doses are about 97% effective.

Measles poses the highest risk to people who have not been vaccinated, including infants younger than 12 months. Persons are likely immune (not susceptible) to measles if any of the following apply:

1. They were born before 1957.
2. They are certain they have had measles.
3. They are up to date on measles vaccines (one dose for children 12 months through 3 years old, two doses in anyone 4 years and older).

After someone is exposed, illness develops in about one to three weeks.

Measles symptoms begin with a fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes, followed by a rash that usually begins at the head and spreads to the rest of the body. People are contagious with measles for four days before the rash appears and up to four days after the rash appears.

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UPDATE

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION SECTION  
THURSTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
412 LILLY RD NE  
OLYMPIA, WA, 98506-5132  
DISEASE REPORTING: (360)786-5470 INFORMATION: (360) 867-2533  
Rachel Wood, MD, MPH, Health Officer



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Measles can be serious in all age groups. However, children younger than 5 years and adults older than 20 years are more likely to suffer from measles complications. Common complications of measles include ear infection, lung infection and diarrhea. Swelling of the brain is a rare but much more serious complication. Measles may cause pregnant women to give birth prematurely, or have a low-birth-weight baby. For every 1,000 children with measles, one or two will die from the disease.

*Thank you for helping to protect the health of Thurston County*

TO REPORT A NOTIFIABLE CONDITION IN THURSTON COUNTY	
Voice mail for reporting <b>Non-immediately reportable conditions (24 hours a day)</b>	Phone: 360-786-5470 Fax: 360-867-2601
<b>Day time immediately reportable conditions</b>	360-867-2500 ask staff to locate Communicable Disease staff
<b>After hours immediately and 24 hour reportable conditions or a public health emergency</b>	Call 911 and ask staff to locate the Health Officer.
No one is available with Thurston County Public Health and condition is <b>immediately notifiable</b>	1-877-539-4344 – Washington State Department of Health

# Suspect Measles Worksheet

Probable and confirmed cases are **IMMEDIATELY** reportable to Thurston County Public Health

Consider measles in the differential diagnosis of patients with fever and rash:

	Yes	No	Comments
A) What is the highest temperature recorded?		°F	Fever onset date: ___/___/___
B) Does the rash have any of the following characteristics?			Rash onset date: ___/___/___
Was the rash preceded by one of the symptoms listed in (C) by 2-4 days?			Measles rashes are red, maculopapular rashes that may become confluent – they typically start at hairline, then face, and spreads rapidly down body.
Did fever overlap rash?			
Did rash start on head or face?			
C) Does the patient have any of the following?			Rash onset typically occurs 2-4 days after first symptoms of fever ( $\geq 101^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) and one or more of the 3 C's (cough, conjunctivitis, or coryza).
Cough			
Runny nose (coryza)			
Red eyes (conjunctivitis)			
D) Unimmunized or unknown immune status?			Dates of measles vaccine: #1 ___/___/___ #2 ___/___/___
E) Exposure to a known measles case?			Date and place of exposure:
F) Travel, visit to health care facility, or other known high-risk exposure in past 21 days?			See local health department for potential exposure sites.

Measles should be highly suspected if you answered YES to at least one item in B and C, PLUS a YES in D or E or F.

**IMMEDIATELY:**

- Mask and isolate the patient (in negative air pressure room when possible) AND
- Call Thurston County Public Health at the numbers below to arrange testing at the WA State Public Health Laboratories (WAPHL). All health care providers must receive approval from Thurston County Public Health prior to submission. Processing times at commercial labs may be lengthy.

**Collect the following specimens**

- Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab for rubeola PCR and culture (preferred respiratory specimen)**
  - o Swab the posterior nasal passage with a Dacron™ or rayon swab and place the swab in 2–3 ml of viral transport medium. Store specimen in refrigerator and transport on ice.
  - o Throat swab also acceptable.
- Urine for rubeola PCR and culture**
  - o Collect at least 50 ml of clean voided urine in a sterile container and store in refrigerator.
- Serum for rubeola IgM and IgG testing**
  - o Draw at least 4-5 ml blood (yields about 1.5 ml serum) in a red or tiger top (serum separator) tube. Store specimen in refrigerator and transport on ice.

If you have questions about this assessment or collection and transport of specimens, please call Thurston County Public Health:

**Monday-Friday (8am-5pm) - Call 360-867-2500 ask staff to locate Communicable Disease staff.  
After Hours - Call 911 and ask staff to locate the Health Officer.**