



For Immediate Release:

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Measles Vaccination Recommended for Residents

Residents are encouraged to seek vaccination and early treatment

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is reporting higher than usual measles activity in Los Angeles County. Residents who have not received all recommended doses of a measles-containing vaccine are encouraged to arrange for vaccination and those with measles-like symptoms should consult a medical provider immediately. As of today, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has confirmed 10 measles cases in Los Angeles County.

“Because we have high vaccination rates, measles cases are rare and it is unusual to see this level of measles activity,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and County Health Officer. “Most measles cases in the United States are imported from travelers who have spent time in areas of the world where measles is more common. Among the confirmed cases in Los Angeles County, eight are believed to have been linked to international travel and two cases are currently under investigation.”

Importance of Early Diagnosis and Treatment

Measles symptoms include high fever (up to 105°F); runny nose; cough; body aches; conjunctivitis (red or watery eyes); and a rash that usually begins at the ears and hairline and spreads down to cover the face, trunk, arms and legs. Measles can be serious. Complications can include ear infections, pneumonia, swelling in the casing of the brain, and even death. Pregnant women with measles can have a miscarriage, give birth prematurely, or have a low-birth-weight baby.

Individuals who have measles-like symptoms or think they have been exposed should consult a health care provider immediately as to not miss an opportunity for early treatment, which may prevent measles infection or reduce severity. Whenever possible, contact your medical provider before seeking treatment in person, so that steps can be taken to minimize exposure of patients and staff.

Recommended Measles Vaccines

“Measles is a highly contagious disease,” said Dr. Fielding. “If you are not vaccinated and are exposed, there is a 90% chance that you will become infected. You can also be infected by being in a room where a person with measles has been, even after that person has left the room. This is why it is so critical that children and adults receive all recommended measles vaccinations, especially since we are seeing an increase in measles activity.”

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine is very effective, with 99% of persons developing immunity after receiving 2 doses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend:

- Children receive one dose of MMR vaccine at 12 through 15 months of age and a second dose between 4 and 6 years of age.



- Infants younger than 12 months of age who will be traveling internationally receive an MMR dose as early as 6 months of age and 2 additional doses after they turn 12 months of age.
- Adults who were born after 1956 receive at least 1 dose of MMR vaccine, unless they have proof that they have been vaccinated or are immune to measles.
- College and postsecondary education students, health care workers, and international travelers receive a second MMR dose unless they have evidence of immunity.
- Women get vaccinated before pregnancy, since MMR vaccine is not recommended during pregnancy.

Resources

Residents are encouraged to speak with their primary health care provider about measles vaccinations. Other resources available include:

- No-cost and low-cost vaccinations are available for children and adolescents who do not have a regular health care provider or health insurance.
- Some clinics also offer vaccines at no-cost or a reduced-cost for uninsured adults.
- Travel Vaccination Clinics.
- Pharmacies (e.g. Vons, CVS, Rite Aid, and Walgreens): Insurance may be accepted or payment required (with possible reimbursement by individual insurance plans).

For more information, please call the LA County Information Line at 2-1-1 from any cell phone or land line in the county or visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip. Individuals should call ahead to confirm vaccine availability, cost and eligibility.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises nearly 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$900 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: @LAPublicHealth.

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