



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
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MEASLES OUTBREAKS WORLDWIDE: HEIGHTENED AWARENESS WARRANTED

Measles outbreaks continue to be reported in the United States related to foreign travel or contact with infectious foreign travelers. Outbreaks are occurring in many countries, including European countries. Since Los Angeles County is a popular destination, the potential for importing measles is high. Measles is a highly communicable disease that can have serious complications. Infected persons are capable of transmitting measles for at least four days before the beginning of the rash to four days after its appearance.

- **Consider measles when evaluating any patient who has an acute rash illness with fever.** Symptoms usually begin 10-12 days (up to 18 days) after exposure with a prodrome of fever as high as 105 degrees, malaise, cough, runny nose, and conjunctivitis. Two to four days following the onset of the prodrome, a maculopapular rash develops.
- **IMMEDIATELY report any suspect cases in Los Angeles County to the Morbidity Central Reporting Unit at 888-397-3993 (phone) or 888-397-3778 (fax).** Do NOT wait for laboratory confirmation before reporting a suspect case. During non-business hours (before 7:30 am, after 5:00 pm, or weekends) call 213-974-1234. For cases among residents of the Cities of Long Beach or Pasadena, contact their respective health departments.
- **Obtain blood specimens for serologic confirmation of the diagnosis.** Blood specimens should be obtained at the time of clinical presentation and be tested for both measles IgM and IgG antibodies. Additionally, specimens for measles virus culture should be collected and transported in a tube of viral transport media. If within 4 days of rash onset, collect both a nasopharyngeal swab and a urine specimen. If within 5-7 days of rash onset, collect urine specimen only.
- **Respiratory and airborne precautions should be taken to prevent transmission.** Suspect measles cases needing medical attention should not be allowed in patient waiting areas. They should be masked and placed immediately in an examination room, with the door closed. The examination room in which a patient with suspected measles or confirmed measles was examined should not be used again for two hours. With hospitalized patients, respiratory isolation is recommended for 4 days after the onset of rash.
- **Recommend MMR vaccination as post-exposure prophylaxis for susceptible contacts.** MMR vaccine given within 72 hours of exposure can prevent measles. For susceptible persons who cannot be vaccinated, immune globulin (IG) can be given within 6 days of exposure to prevent measles or modify the disease if it occurs. For technical assistance or additional information about measles, please call the Los Angeles County Immunization Program's Surveillance Unit at (213) 351-7800.
- **Vaccination of Travelers.** Before international travel, (1) adults should have documented administration of 2 doses of live measles virus vaccine, or laboratory evidence of immunity, or born before 1957, or documentation of physician diagnosed measles, and (2) children aged 12 months and older should have received two doses of MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days, with the first dose administered on or after the first birthday. Children aged 6-11 months should receive a dose of monovalent measles vaccine before departure. If monovalent measles vaccine is not available, MMR vaccine may be used.

For technical assistance or additional information about measles, please call the Los Angeles County Immunization Program's Surveillance Unit at (213) 351-7800.



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