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HEALTH ALERT

Fever and Rash? Consider Measles. Traveling Abroad? Protect Against Measles 2/2/2024

CDPH/Health Advisory – February 2, 2024 – The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reminds health care providers to consider [measles](#) in persons presenting with a febrile rash illness and other symptoms consistent with measles. Multiple measles cases have been confirmed in the United States in recent weeks, and have been linked to overseas travel, reflecting a global rise in measles cases. Airborne precautions should be immediately instituted to prevent nosocomial measles exposures, and patients should be up to date with measles vaccinations, especially if planning to travel abroad. Healthcare providers in California should report suspect measles cases to their [local health department \(LHD\)](#) by telephone, even before laboratory confirmation.



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Behavioral Health
phone: (707) 268-2990
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Social Services
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State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



Health Advisory

TO: Healthcare Providers
Fever and Rash? Consider Measles. Traveling Abroad? Protect Against Measles.
2/2/2024

Key Messages

- Health care providers should consider measles in persons presenting with a febrile rash illness and other symptoms consistent with measles.
- Multiple measles cases have been confirmed in the United States in recent weeks. Cases have been linked to overseas travel, reflecting a global rise in measles cases.
- Airborne precautions should be immediately instituted to prevent nosocomial measles exposures.
- Suspected measles cases should be promptly reported to the appropriate [local health department \(LHD\)](#) by telephone, even before laboratory confirmation.
- Ensure that patients are up to date with measles vaccinations, especially if travel abroad is planned.

Background

In 2023, 58 confirmed measles cases were identified in the U.S., four of which occurred in California. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has [seen an increase](#) in direct importations of measles by international travelers. From December 1, 2023, through February 1, 2024, there have been three measles cases in California, all in international travelers.

Recommendations

Providers should suspect measles if compatible symptoms AND risk factor(s) are present.

- Symptoms
 - At least one of the “3 Cs” – cough, coryza and conjunctivitis AND
 - Febrile rash illness
- Risk factors
 - In the prior 3 weeks, any of: travel outside of North America, transit through U.S. international airports, or interaction with international visitors (including at a U.S. tourist attraction)

Steps for providers to take when patients present with febrile rash illness:



- Isolate patient immediately, in an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) if possible. See [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) (PDF) infection control guidance. Infected people are contagious from 4 days before rash onset through 4 days after rash onset.
- Assess for risk factors and measles immunization status.
- If measles is suspected, contact your [local health department \(LHD\)](#) promptly by telephone to discuss measles testing and control measures.
- If advised to test for measles by your LHD, submit a specimen for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing. PCR is the preferred testing method for measles. Measles IgM testing is frequently falsely positive and is not recommended.

Providers should ensure that patients are up to date on measles vaccinations at all times, and especially if travel abroad is planned. Infants 6 to 11 months old need 1 dose of measles vaccine before traveling abroad. Children 12 months and older should receive 2 doses before travel. Adults born during or after 1957 without evidence of immunity against measles should have documentation of two doses of MMR vaccine prior to travel, with the second dose administered no earlier than 28 days after the first dose.

Resources

Health care providers can reference the latest guidance on diagnosing and managing measles in the resources below:

CDC: [Measles guidance for healthcare providers](#)

CDC: [January 25, 2024 COCA Now measles message](#)

CDPH: [Measles resources for California healthcare providers](#)

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