



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Health Department Reports Measles Case, Urges Self-Reporting by Contacts

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department is investigating exposures to a measles case in Pittsburgh and urging self-reporting by individuals who may have been exposed to the case.

The Health Department has identified a case of measles in a person who was exposed to the disease in New York state. Additional testing is being conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and precautionary measures are being implemented to protect those at risk. Contacts in the person's workplace and healthcare settings are being notified and efforts are under way to find others.

Additional exposures may have occurred when the person rode the northbound 64 Port Authority bus leaving Fifth Avenue and South Highland Avenue going toward Shadyside and Lawrenceville at 9:12 a.m. on Friday, February 14. Anyone who rode this bus between 9 and 11 a.m. on that day may have been exposed.

While most people are not at risk because they have been immunized or have had measles, the following groups of individuals are susceptible to becoming infected with measles:

- Anyone born since 1957 who has not received two doses of effective measles vaccine known as MMR, which would include infants too young to have been immunized; persons who were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine, which was used from 1963 through 1967, and have not been re-vaccinated; and those who refused vaccination.
- Persons whose immune systems are compromised due to disease or medication.

The Health Department recommends the following to anyone who rode the 64 Port Authority bus on Friday, February 14, between 9 and 11 a.m.:

- If you are susceptible to measles and become ill with symptoms of measles between now and March 7, contact your primary care provider immediately and tell him or her that you may have been exposed to measles. Do not go directly to the office, urgent care center or emergency room, as this may expose other persons. Pregnant women should contact their doctor about their immune status.

Health care providers who suspect measles should call the Health Department for consultation and to arrange testing.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus. Symptoms begin 7 to 21 days after exposure and include a runny nose, red and watery eyes, cough and a high fever. After four days, a raised, red rash begins on the face and spreads downward to neck, trunk and extremities. The rash usually lasts four to seven days.

An individual with measles can spread the virus to others for four days before and four days after the rash

begins. It is spread by infected droplets during sneezing or coughing, touching contaminated objects, and direct contact with infected nasal or throat secretions. Infected droplets and secretions can remain in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours.

Complications from measles can include ear infection, diarrhea and pneumonia, encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain), and even death. Measles can also cause miscarriages or premature delivery in pregnant women.

The measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is given to toddlers when they are 12 to 15 months of age, and a second MMR vaccine is required for all Pennsylvania school children. However, individuals who have received only one dose of the vaccine, instead of the recommended two doses, may still be susceptible to the virus. The MMR vaccine can help prevent infection if it is given within three days of exposure.

The Health Department recommends that any person who is due for measles vaccination make arrangements to receive it from their medical provider. Persons without health insurance may receive the vaccine at the Health Department's immunization clinic at 3441 Forbes Avenue in Oakland. There is no risk in getting an additional dose of the MMR vaccine for individuals who may have already received it.

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