HEALTH UPDATE: Measles in the San Francisco Bay Area

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TO: Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Infection Control, Hospitals, and Clinics

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This is an update to our March 7 health advisory on measles (see www.sccphd.org/providers). Between March 5 and April 3, measles has been confirmed in six residents of Santa Clara County (5) and Alameda County (1), all unvaccinated. One additional linked case has been confirmed in Nevada. All cases are linked to an unvaccinated traveler who was exposed in Europe and developed measles after returning to the San Francisco Bay Area. Local health departments are conducting contact investigations to prevent further spread. Measles is very infectious, and airborne transmission can occur in settings with large numbers of people like healthcare facilities, schools, childcare centers, shopping centers, public transportation, airports, and amusement parks. Clinicians should be vigilant in identifying and appropriately managing suspected measles cases to avoid ongoing transmission and ensuring that their patients and staff are up-to-date with immunizations.

Clinicians are requested to:

1. **Consider/suspect measles** in patients with a morbilliform rash that begins on the face and fever \( \geq 101^\circ F (38.3^\circ C) \), especially if unvaccinated. Ask about measles vaccination status, onset and duration of fever and rash, exposure to other measles cases, travel, and international visitors in the three weeks prior to illness.

2. **Prepare your facility for the possibility of patients with measles.** Ask patients to call ahead first if they have fever and rash. Post signage that directs patients with fever and rash to notify staff. Train staff to immediately implement airborne precautions if measles is suspected.
   - Mask and isolate the patient in an airborne isolation room
   - Do not re-use exam room for at least one hour after the patient has left the room
   - Assure airborne precautions at other healthcare facilities if referring the patient

3. **Report** suspected measles cases **immediately**, while the patient is still in your office, to Public Health at 408-885-4214; after hours, call 408-998-3438 and ask for the Health Officer on call. **Call, do not fax.**

4. **Test** suspected measles cases in consultation with Public Health:
   - Collect a throat swab (for measles PCR) with a Dacron swab and place in Viral Transport Media
   - Collect a urine specimen (for measles PCR) in any container (does not need to be sterile)
   - Draw blood (for measles IgM and IgG) if and only if it is already Day 4 or later after rash onset

5. **Advise patients with suspected measles to stay home with no visitors until at least four days after rash onset and/or until cleared by Public Health to resume normal activities.**

6. **Confirm immunity of contacts and health care staff** with unknown vaccination status by ordering Measles IgG only. Do not order measles IgM testing for asymptomatic individuals, as there is a substantial possibility of a false positive IgM result.

7. **Vaccinate children and non-immune adults**, unless contraindicated, according to national guidelines.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp](http://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp) or [www.sccphd.org/diseases](http://www.sccphd.org/diseases) and click on Measles.

***Santa Clara County Public Health Department is moving to an email system to send out health alerts, advisories, and updates. These notifications provide clinicians official guidance from the Santa Clara County Health Officer about important public health issues, such as communicable disease outbreaks. To receive these emails, please sign up at [http://ecpurl.com/dqocab](http://ecpurl.com/dqocab). Note: if you are part of a hospital or health system in Santa Clara County, you might already receive these emails from your administrator.***