

County of Santa Clara

Public Health Department

Health Officer
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HEALTH UPDATE: Measles in Santa Clara County and California

DATE: February 3, 2015

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

FROM: Sara H. Cody, MD
Health Officer

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Communicable Disease Controller

Since our last health alert on January 20, a second case of measles (rash onset on January 22; infectious period began January 18 and patient was isolated on January 22) has been confirmed in a Santa Clara County adult with a history of one MMR as a child and no travel outside Santa Clara County. To date, there have been 92 confirmed cases in California, 59 of which are epidemiologically linked to the Disneyland outbreak. Neither of our two cases have a known epi-link to the Disneyland outbreak, indicating that measles may be circulating undetected in our community despite relatively high vaccination rates in our county. Of the 92 cases statewide, 56 (62%) have been in adults ≥ 20 years old. One dose of MMR vaccine immunizes 95% of recipients against measles, and with a second MMR dose 99% are immune. Many adults born before 1989 only received one MMR vaccine as children. In 2014, the percentage of school-aged children who had received 2 MMRs in Santa Clara County is 96% on average in public schools (with individual schools ranging from 79% – 100%) and 92% on average in private schools (range 36% – 100%). Because a minimum of 94% is required for herd immunity, there are school and other (especially healthcare) settings where significant measles transmission can occur.

Updated recommendations for clinicians:

- 1. Vaccinate** any adult born after 1956 who is unsure of their MMR status (or received only one MMR) and is concerned about measles. Alternatively, draw measles IgG and vaccinate if IgG negative.
 - **Children** who received their first MMR after turning one year old may receive their second MMR early if their parents are concerned about measles and request vaccination. The second MMR can be given ≥ 28 days after the first dose and will count for public school entry.
- 2. Suspect measles** in anyone with fever and morbilliform rash that starts on the head, hairline, or face. The rash characteristic of measles always begins on the head and spreads downward. The rash begins disappearing four days later, in the same order that it appeared.
- 3. If measles is suspected**, call your infectious disease specialist or infection control practitioner (if available), and then contact the Santa Clara County Public Health Department (SCCPHD) at 408-885-4214. After hours, call county communications at 408-998-3438 and ask for the Health Officer on call.
- 4. Send specimens** to the Santa Clara County Public Health Lab only after consulting with SCCPHD.
 - 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
 - Note: If you check measles IgG to confirm immunity in an asymptomatic patient, please do not also send an IgM titer, as there is a substantial possibility of a false positive IgM result.

For more information about clinical presentation, vaccination, testing, and prevention of transmission in healthcare settings, visit www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp, www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/Measles.aspx, or www.sccphd.org/diseases and click on Measles. Case counts are updated Mon/Wed/Fri on CDPH's website.

Health ALERT: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health ADVISORY: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health UPDATE: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.