

**Lancaster County Emergency Management Agency
Lancaster County Health Advisory Council
Important Information Regarding Measles
12/28/2022**

What it is...

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that causes febrile rash illness. Measles spreads rapidly in unvaccinated populations, particularly those in congregate living conditions.

Currently there is an outbreak of measles in Columbus, Ohio. The first measles case was identified October 22, 2022, and as of December 12th there are 73 confirmed cases with 26 hospitalizations and no deaths. In the United States most cases of measles occur in people who have travelled abroad and import measles into the United States. Typically, the number of these cases increases from mid-winter through spring.

While most people are not at risk for contracting measles 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 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.

What it does...

Measles is one of the most contagious of all infectious diseases; up to 9 out of 10 susceptible persons with close contact to a measles patient will develop measles. The virus is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Measles virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area.

What to expect...

Symptoms of measles include:

- High Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose (coryza)
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis).

What to do...

For more information about prevention of measles, please contact your chosen primary care provider to discuss your options.

Stay informed...

For up-to-date information on measles including case counts, signs/symptoms, spread, prevention, treatment, and more, go to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website or seek other credible sources.

For any questions regarding you or your family's health, consult your chosen primary care provider. Call your health care provider if you think you or your child may have been exposed to measles or if you or your child has a rash that looks like measles.

Resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, November 5). *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>

Pennsylvania Department of Health. (2022, November 4). 2022-PAHAN-676-12-14-ADV, Measles Identification and Prevention in Pennsylvania. *Pennsylvania Department of Health*.