



"Your Local
Health Department"

Branch - Hillsdale - St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Cases of Measles

Coldwater, MI – In light of the announcement of two new cases of measles in Michigan, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency is urging parents to protect their children from measles and other diseases through vaccination. "Measles is one of the most highly communicable infectious diseases. All persons who have not had the disease or been successfully immunized are susceptible." says Yvonne Atwood, Director of Personal Health and Disease Prevention at the local health department. "Measles, like the other vaccine preventable diseases, can have very serious complications such as secondary infections, blindness, and even death."

Please see the press release below from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in regards to the newest cases of measles. Children and adults can get vaccinations at any of the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency offices. To schedule an appointment and for immunization questions, please give us a call at [517-279-9561](tel:517-279-9561) ext. 0100#. Visit our webpage at www.bhsj.org and follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BHSJWIC.

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 26, 2018

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Two more measles cases identified in Michigan due to international travel; health officials urge protection through vaccination

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has confirmed two additional cases of measles in Michigan for 2018; both related to international travel. These individuals were residents of Oakland and Washtenaw counties.

Neither of these cases are related to the two previous Michigan cases in 2018. However, all four cases were the result of exposure outside of the country, emphasizing the higher risk of measles during international travel and the importance of being protected by vaccination.

One of the ill individuals arrived on July 18 at 11:59 p.m. at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) at the international arrivals area of the North Terminal and did not advise officials of being ill, but was considered contagious at the time. Health officials are in the process of contacting potentially exposed passengers from the flight. Limited exposure to others at DTW may have occurred as this individual exited international baggage claim. The second individual was not contagious during their flight or while at DTW.

Individuals who may have been exposed at DTW should watch for symptoms consistent with measles for 21 days after the possible exposure. If symptoms appear, contact your health care provider promptly. Please direct any questions to your health care provider or your local health department.

Measles is a vaccine-preventable respiratory infection that can result in hospitalization, pneumonia, encephalitis and death. The illness begins with a high fever, red eyes, cough, runny nose, and is followed by a red, raised body rash starting on the head and face that then spreads to the rest of the body. Measles patients often experience eye pain and sensitivity to light. Cases can be contagious a few days before the rash appears, which increases the possibility of unknowingly exposing others.

“Measles is easily spread, and these cases emphasize the importance of being up-to-date on all vaccinations for everyone’s protection,” said Dr. Eden Wells, MDHHS chief medical executive. “The bottom line is immunizations are the best way to protect our families and communities from the harmful, sometimes deadly consequences of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles.”

The measles vaccine is highly effective and very safe. Adults who do not have evidence of immunity against measles should get at least one dose of the vaccine. The first of two routine childhood measles vaccine doses is given at 12 months of age. A second vaccine dose is given before the start of kindergarten.

For international travel, infants as young as 6 months should be vaccinated against measles. Measles vaccine, or other acceptable documentation of immunity to measles, is recommended for all persons travelling internationally.

Measles is a rare disease in the United States as a result of inclusion of the measles vaccine in routine childhood immunization since the 1960s. However, measles continues to be common in other countries.

This year several countries in Europe are reporting significant measles outbreaks, including France, Italy, Germany, England, Romania and Ukraine, among others. Recent outbreaks have also been reported in Venezuela, Colombia and Brazil.

From 2001 – 2012, the average number of measles cases reported nationally per year was about 60 but this has increased in recent years. In 2017, there were 118 cases in the U.S. including two cases in Michigan; the majority of people who got measles were not vaccinated.

In an effort to help parents protect their children from serious vaccine-preventable diseases, MDHHS has partnered with the Franny Strong Foundation in launching the I Vaccinate campaign. I Vaccinate provides vaccination facts for parents to make informed decisions about vaccinations.

For more information, visit Ivaccinate.org.

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