

# Measles in Schools

## What is Measles?

Measles is a highly contagious viral respiratory illness. The virus is transmitted through airborne spread of droplet nuclei or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons; **tiny droplets can remain suspended in the air for up to two hours or more.**

Communicability is greatest from four days before the onset of rash until four days after onset of rash.

The average incubation period for measles is 14 days, with a range of 7-21 days.

**\*\*ANY SUSPECT MEASLES CASES MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE CLARK COUNTY COMBINED HEALTH DISTRICT (CCCHD).  
CCCHD Communicable Disease Staff can be reached 24/7 at 937-390-5600.\*\***

## Contact Tracing:

1. Beginning 4 days before rash onset and through 4 days after rash onset: Track the case throughout the whole building (ex: hallways, lunchroom, classrooms. Etc.).
2. Determine all people who have shared the same spaces, including up to 2 hours after the case left the area.
  - a. Unlike COVID, there is no time duration. A person only has to walk through the same space (i.e.. hallway) as the infected person to be considered a contact.
  - b. Due to this 2-hour time window, the whole building could be exposed to a single measles case.

## Contacts of a Case:

### Unvaccinated Contacts

Unvaccinated contacts who refuse immunization should be **excluded from contact in schools and childcare centers until 21 days after the last case has occurred.**

These cases would be actively monitored by CCCHD daily for 3 weeks (21 days) following exposure.

Contacts who might be susceptible should be immunized with measles vaccine as soon as possible after exposure. Measles **vaccine given within 72 hours after exposure** may prevent or modify the disease.

Unvaccinated persons who receive their first doses of MMR vaccine within 72 hours postexposure may return to childcare, school, or work, but should be instructed to self-monitor for the remainder of the 21-days following exposure, and to call their local health department immediately should they become ill.

### Vaccinated Contacts

Vaccinated contacts should self-monitor for signs and symptoms for 3 weeks (21 days) following exposure and contact CCCHD if they become ill.

Acceptable presumptive evidence of measles immunity includes at least one of the following:

- written documentation of adequate vaccination— receipt of one or more doses of a measles-containing vaccine administered on or after the first birthday for preschool-age children and adults not at high risk, and two doses of measles-containing vaccine for school-age children and adults at high risk for exposure transmission (i.e., health care personnel) ,or
- laboratory evidence of immunity; or
- birth before 1957; or
- laboratory confirmation of disease.

## Preparing for Measles at Your School:

To plan for a case of measles in your building, CCCHD recommends preparing lists of students and staff who are:

1. Unvaccinated with MMR/MMRV vaccine
2. Pregnant
3. Immunocompromised

## Resources:

[CDC: Signs and Symptoms of Measles](#)

[Immunize.org Rash Photos](#)

[Measles Infectious Disease Control Manual \(IDCM\)](#)