



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Jan. 28, 2015**

### **Department of Health Advisory: Possible Measles Exposure in Cumberland County Resident**

**Harrisburg** – The Pennsylvania Department of Health is advising the public of a potential exposure to a case of measles, a vaccine-preventable disease.

A person who has measles may have exposed other people to the disease on the following dates at these Cumberland County and Franklin County, Pennsylvania locations and times:

- **Walmart, 100 S. Conestoga Drive, Shippensburg:** Saturday, Jan. 24, from 8 p.m. to midnight.
- **Shippensburg Urgent Care Center,** 46 Walnut Bottom Rd, Shippensburg, Monday, January 26, from 6:45 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Chambersburg Hospital Emergency Department,** 112 North 7th Street, Chambersburg, Monday, January 26, from 7:45 p.m. to Tuesday, Jan. 27 from 6 a.m.

The vaccine for measles is safe and highly effective. Most people in the United States are immune to measles, either because they received the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine in childhood, or because they were exposed to measles in the pre-vaccine era.

The following groups of individuals are at risk of becoming infected if they have had contact with an infected individual, according to Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) guidelines:

- Infants less than one year of age who are too young to have received the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine;
- Individuals who refused vaccination; and
- Individuals from parts of the world where there is low vaccination coverage or circulating measles.

Additionally, even if you were vaccinated, you may still be at risk if:

- You were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine, which was used from 1963 through 1967, and have not been revaccinated; and

- You were born after 1957 who have only received one dose of MMR vaccine.

“Measles is a potentially very serious and highly contagious virus,” said Acting Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine. “This case underscores the importance of having all children appropriately immunized according to recommended guidelines.”

Symptoms will begin one to two weeks after exposure and include a runny nose, watery eyes, cough and a high fever. After four days, a raised, red rash starts to spread on the face, down the body and out to the arms and legs. The rash usually lasts four to seven days.

An individual with measles can spread the virus to others for four days before and four days after the rash begins. It is spread by sneezing or coughing, touching contaminated objects, and direct contact with infected nasal or throat secretions. Infected droplets and secretions can remain contagious on surfaces for up to two hours.

Complications from measles can include ear infection, diarrhea and pneumonia, inflammation of the brain, and even death. Measles can also cause miscarriages or premature delivery in pregnant women.

The MMR vaccine can help prevent infection if it is given within three days of exposure. If it has been more than three days since your exposure, a dose of immune globulin can provide protection up to six days after exposure. There is no risk in getting an additional dose of the MMR vaccine for individuals who may have already received it.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health urges all residents to be vaccinated against measles. The MMR vaccine is given to toddlers when they are 12 to 15 months of age, and a second dose is required for all Pennsylvania school children. However, individuals who have received only one dose of the vaccine, instead of the recommended two doses, may still be at risk of infection with this virus. If you have not received a second dose, the department encourages you to see your health care provider.

If you or your children are at risk for measles, and become ill with the symptoms one to two weeks after possible exposure, contact your pediatrician or family physician immediately to share that you’ve been exposed so that precautions can be taken to avoid exposing anyone else.

If you are uninsured, the department will be hosting a series of clinics in the impacted counties in the coming days. Additional information will be provided to the public by the department regarding clinic dates and times.

If you are a healthcare provider who suspects measles, please call 1-877-PA-HEALTH for consultation and to arrange testing.

“The recent outbreak of measles in the western part of the country demonstrates the importance of this safe and highly effective vaccine,” added Levine.

For more information about measles, see the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s website at <http://www.health.state.pa.us/pdf/epi/MeaslesFactSheet.pdf>. Additional information from the CDC is also available at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Media contact:** Aimee Tysarczyk or Holli Senior, 717-787-1783

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