



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Dec. 31, 2014**

### **Department of Health Advisory: Possible Measles Exposure in Delaware and Philadelphia Counties**

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

A person who likely has measles may have exposed other people to the disease on the following dates at these southeastern Pennsylvania locations and times:

- **CVS Pharmacy**, 316 E. Lancaster Avenue, Wayne, Pa.: Sunday, Dec. 28, from 5:30 to 8 p.m.
- **Please Touch Museum**, Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park, 4231 Avenue of the Republic, Philadelphia, Pa.: Monday, Dec. 29, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Although the vaccine for measles is highly effective, the following groups of individuals are at risk of becoming infected if they have had contact with an infected individual:

- Infants less than one year of age who are too young to have received the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine;
- Individuals who were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine, which was used from 1963 through 1967, and have not been revaccinated;
- Individuals born after 1957 who have only received one dose of MMR vaccine;
- Individuals who refused vaccination; and
- Individuals from parts of the world where there is low vaccination coverage or circulating measles.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus. 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 or your children are at risk for measles, and become ill with the symptoms one to two weeks after possible exposure, contact your healthcare provider to share that you've been exposed so that precautions can be taken to avoid exposing anyone else.

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

Most people in the United States are immune to measles, either because they received the MMR vaccine in childhood, or because they were exposed to measles in the pre-vaccine era (people born before 1957).

If you are not immune to measles and want to receive MMR or immune globulin, ask your healthcare provider or contact the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH.

For more information about measles, see the Pennsylvania Department of Health's website at <http://www.health.state.pa.us/pdf/epi/MeaslesFactSheet.pdf>.

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