



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Measles Outbreak Expands to Highland County in SW Ohio

Health officials urge caution when traveling with infants to measles outbreak areas

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Highland County Health Department have confirmed a case of measles in southwest Ohio. The new case involves an infant less than six months old whose family traveled in mid-May to north-central Ohio, where six counties are experiencing a measles outbreak. At this time, ODH has confirmed only one case in Highland County, but that number could rise.

Ohio's continuing measles outbreak is part of the largest outbreak in the U.S. since 1994. If your family plans to travel to affected areas of Ohio, the U.S., or abroad, this is a good time to check with your healthcare provider to make sure you are up-to-date on immunizations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website lists U.S. and international "Measles Cases and Outbreaks" at <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/case-outbreaks.html>.

When individuals are fully vaccinated, the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is 97 percent effective in preventing measles.

"Contracting measles is especially serious for infants younger than one year of age," said ODH State Epidemiologist Dr. Mary DiOrio. "Parents with infants too young to be vaccinated should consider not traveling with them to areas where measles outbreaks are occurring."

Governor John R. Kasich signed an executive order today that allows licensed pharmacists to administer the MMR vaccine (effective June 9, 2014) to individuals 18 years and older pursuant to Amended Emergency Rule 4729-5-38.

"It's important to give individuals more opportunities to receive an MMR vaccination," DiOrio said.

Symptoms for measles include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, sore throat, and a red rash appearing three to five days after the start of the symptoms. Those who are not up-to-date on their immunizations should contact their healthcare provider or local health department and receive the MMR vaccine if there is no medical reason not to do so.

ODH and its local public health partners support the vaccine recommendations set forth by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and CDC. These recommendations include vaccination schedules for when both children and adults should receive their vaccinations.

For more information about measles, visit the ODH website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/>.

Chronology

- June 9: Governor Kasich signs an executive order allowing licensed pharmacists to administer the MMR vaccine to individuals 18 years and older
- June 7: Highland County Health Department contacts ODH about a suspected measles case
- June 6: ODH sends out a press release about summertime travel and staying healthy
- May 27: More than 13,000 doses of MMR vaccine have been distributed to local health departments to date to combat the measles outbreak. Local health jurisdictions have administered 8,240 doses (62 percent) of these doses thus far
- May 23: Number of measles cases surpasses 150 in a six-county area
- May 13: ODH conducts a conference call with media across the state and local health jurisdictions regarding measles outbreak
- May 8: ODH Bureau of Infectious Diseases staff members begin to provide periodic on-site assistance to affected local health jurisdictions
- May 3: ODH develops measles guidance for school nurses in collaboration with CDC and distributes it to school nurses, Head Start Programs and local health jurisdictions
- May 2: ODH issues measles guidance to Ohio schools
- May 1: ODH establishes a measles homepage on its website containing an overview of the measles outbreak, links to the local health jurisdiction in each affected county, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions about measles
- May 1: ODH issues measles guidance to healthcare providers
- April 25: ODH orders MMR vaccines for delivery to all counties that plan to hold vaccination clinics
- April 25: CDC officially confirms Ohio's measles cases
- April 24: ODH, the Ashland County-City Health Department, the Knox County Health Department and the Holmes County General Health District issue a joint press release with the dates/times/locations of MMR vaccine clinics
- April 24: ODH and its public health partners begin regular conference calls with CDC regarding the measles outbreak
- April 24: ODH, Knox County Health Department and Holmes County General Health District issue a combined press release regarding the suspected measles outbreak
- April 23: ODH alerts Ohio hospitals about the suspected measles cases
- April 23: ODH is alerted about a possible measles outbreak in three Ohio counties

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