



Eastern Idaho Public Health

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NEWS RELEASE

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Measles Cases Continue to Rise Across the Country Public Health recommends checking immunization status and getting vaccinated

Childhood vaccine-preventable diseases continue to affect many children in the United States. As of February 2, Idaho has no reported cases of measles; however, over 100 cases have been reported in neighboring states such as California, Oregon, Washington, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. Many of the measles cases originated from exposure to a case of measles in California's Disneyland and/or California Adventure.

Measles is a serious and very contagious disease and easily spreads from person to person through coughing and sneezing. Cases of measles also may result in additional illnesses, such as pneumonia, swelling of the brain, and may result in hospitalization and high medical costs. In developing countries, hundreds of thousands of measles cases continue to occur, and are just an airplane ride away from the United States. Many of these infected children die. It has been estimated that 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people will become infected with measles if they spend time in a meeting, classroom, or other close space with an infected person.

The measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine is very effective in providing protection from disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all children receive their first MMR vaccine on or soon after their first birthday. A second dose is recommended between 4-6 years of age, before children start school. All health care workers are required to show proof of two MMR vaccines also, or provide proof of immunity. The vaccine is very effective, showing 99% protection in patients receiving two doses.

Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) offers MMR vaccine to children and adults throughout our eight-county region. Many medical providers also provide MMR vaccine for the children they serve. If traveling to an area where known cases of measles exist, regardless of age, please call your physician or EIPH to discuss vaccination recommendations.

Before Idaho has its first case of measles, EIPH urges all parents to review their children's immunization record or call their doctor or the health district to check immunization status. If your child has passed their first birthday or their fourth birthday and has not received their first or second MMR vaccine yet, make an appointment soon. In the event of a measles case in a local school district or childcare facility, your child may be required to stay home for up to 21 days if the child is not vaccinated.

We can all protect ourselves and our children from measles by getting this safe vaccine. Please do your part and protect yourself and your family. By doing so you are also protecting the vulnerable infants who are less than one year old who can't get the vaccine, as well as those who are immuno-compromised. If you have any questions or would like more information, please call EIPH's immunization program at 208-533-3235.

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