

Measles Control Guide for School Staff

Adapted from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

[Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff](#)

Description

Measles is a highly infectious viral disease that can lead to serious complications. These complications include ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, encephalitis, and even death. Measles vaccine is recommended for all children over age 1 and adults born since 1957. Measles is a highly contagious disease and a single case is considered a public health emergency.

Measles begins with cold-like symptoms. The symptoms include a cough; runny nose; red, itchy, watery eyes; and a high fever (as high as 103–105°F). Two to four days after the symptoms begin; a raised, red rash will appear on the head and spread downward to become a full-body rash, usually lasting 5–6 days. People with measles appear quite ill.

Definitions

Measles immunity: documented laboratory results indicating immunity to measles or documentation of receiving 2 doses of MMR/MMRV vaccine prior to exposure to measles.

Exposure to measles: sharing the same air space with a person infectious with measles during the 4 days prior through the 4 days after their rash onset or if the person was in the setting 2 hours after the infectious person was present. Example setting including classroom, waiting rooms, etc.

Susceptible person: person without documentation of measles immunity.

Mode of Transmission

Measles is spread from person-to-person by airborne droplets or by the nasal and throat secretions of an infected person. It spreads easily through the air and can stay in the air 2 hours after an infected person leaves an area.

Incubation Period

About 10 days (range 7–21 days) from exposure to upper-respiratory symptoms. The average time from exposure to beginning of rash is 14 days.

Infectious Period

Measles is infectious from one day before the beginning of the respiratory symptoms (usually about 4 days before the rash onset) to 4 days after the appearance of the rash.

School Staff/Nurse Responsibility

Ensure students comply with Washington State immunization requirements (two documented doses of MMR or MMRV vaccine.)

Measles (cont.)

Actions to take if a student, staff, volunteer, or contractor has measles like symptoms

1. Should any person present at the school with a rash illness, especially if fever and/or other symptoms:
 - **Immediately isolate the person in a separate room.**
 - Notify parent/guardian for pickup, if the person is a student.
 - **Notify Kitsap Public Health District at 360-728-2235** (report of suspected cases by telephone is mandatory and must be immediate.)
 - Refer to a licensed health care provider for assessment. **Ensure that the provider's office staff is informed about possible measles before patient arrival** in order to prevent transmission in the office waiting room.
 - Maintain and support confidentiality for the student.
2. If a measles case is suspected, prepare a list of students and staff who may be susceptible.

If a measles case is confirmed in the school

1. Kitsap Public Health District will send the school a document with exclusion conditions included.
2. Kitsap Public Health District will require implementation of the following control measures:
 - a. Exclude confirmed case from school until four full days have passed since the appearance of rash.
 - b. Exclude susceptible students for 21 days past the last confirmed measles case at the school.
 - c. Students that do not receive a second dose of measles vaccine during an outbreak will be excluded from school.
 - d. Staff, volunteers, and contractors will have to produce proof of immunity or vaccination, and Kitsap Public Health District will exclude susceptible staff.
3. Support school administrator in exclusion of susceptible students and staff as advised by your local health officer.
4. Communicate with parents/guardians about school exclusion requirements and the importance of immunization. A sample letter you can use is attached.

Future Prevention and Education

Measles can be controlled and eventually eliminated if people are vaccinated fully and on time.

Resources

Kitsap Public Health District Website:

http://kitsappublichealth.org/news/Measles/alert_corporate_measles_outbreak.php

WA Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: <http://www.k12.wa.us/HealthServices/Resources.aspx>

WA Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Measles>