



COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY

Commissioners

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release:

Health Department Announces Possible Measles Exposure

July 28, 2011 (Norristown, PA) The Montgomery County Health Department is alerting residents that a case of measles has been identified in a Montgomery County resident who traveled internationally to Nigeria, Africa where there is an ongoing measles outbreak. At present, only the traveler has been identified as a case, however surveillance has been enhanced. At this time there is no evidence that this case is related to the measles cluster in Berks County.

County investigators and staff from local health care facilities have contacted a number of individuals who might have been exposed to measles to assess each person's risk. While most of those exposed have been found to be immune to the disease, some non-immune persons have been asked to stay home until they are cleared of risk.

The resident visited three places during the infectious period. Because measles is spread by infected droplets during sneezing or coughing, contaminated objects, and direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, exposures may have occurred at these places. The measles virus resides in the mucus in the nose and throat of infected people. When they sneeze or cough, droplets spray into the air and the droplets remain active and contagious on infected surfaces for up to two hours.

Exposures may have occurred at the following locations and times:

Victory Christian Fellowship at 2650 Audubon Road in Lower Providence:

- July 24 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Mercy Suburban Hospital Emergency Department on DeKalb Pike in East Norriton:

- Between 10:00 p.m. July 26 and 5:00 a.m. July 27

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POTTSTOWN HEALTH CENTER

364 King Street

Pottstown, PA 19464

Phone: (610) 970-5040 Fax: (610) 970-5048

EASTERN COURT HOUSE ANNEX

102 York Road, Suite 401

Willow Grove, PA 19090

Phone: (215) 784-5415 Fax: (215) 784-5524

Whitemarsh Medical Services at 1107 Bethlehem Pike, Suite 210, Flourtown, PA

- July 27 between 3:50 pm and 6:10 pm

The following groups of people are susceptible to measles infection:

- Infants who are too young to have been immunized (less than one year of age).
- Persons who were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine, which was used from 1963 through 1967, and have not been revaccinated.
- Some persons born after 1957 who have only received one dose of vaccine.
- Those who have refused vaccination.
- Those from areas of the world where there is low vaccine coverage or circulating measles.
- Immune-compromised persons, such as organ transplant recipients, patients receiving chemotherapy and people living with HIV/AIDS who have impaired immune systems.

Measles begins with a fever that lasts for a couple of days, followed by a cough, runny nose, and conjunctivitis (pink eye). The illness starts with a runny nose, watery eyes, cough, and high fever. After 2 or 3 days, tiny white spots appear in the mouth. After 2 more days, a raised, red rash starts on the face and spreads down the body and out to the arms and legs. The rash usually lasts 4 to 7 days. Symptoms start about 10 days after exposure and last from 1 to 2 weeks. After about five days, the rash fades in the same order it appeared.

Health officials recommend the following to anyone who may have been exposed during the periods mentioned above:

- Check your immunity status with your healthcare provider.
- If you or your children are susceptible to measles and become ill with symptoms of measles from one to two weeks after possible exposure, contact your primary health care provider immediately and let them know you may have been exposed.

Because measles is highly contagious, individuals should call their health care provider to inform them of possible exposure before going to their office in order to avoid exposing other patients.

Health care providers who suspect measles in a patient should call the Montgomery County Health Department at 610-278-5117 for consultation and to arrange for testing.

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This alert also serves as a reminder that Pennsylvania's immunization law requires that all children attending school or licensed day care centers have a record of immunization against measles. The measles vaccine is combined with the vaccines for mumps and rubella (German measles) and is known as the MMR vaccine. Measles vaccine is given to toddlers when they are 12 to 15 months of age. A second MMR is required for all schoolchildren.

Finally because of the risk of measles in both developed and developing countries, **all international travelers** should be up to date on immunizations, regardless of the travel destination. A pre-travel health consultation is needed 4 to 6 weeks before a trip since many vaccines take time to become effective, and some vaccines must be given in a series over a period of days or sometimes weeks. If it is less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see your doctor.

For more information about measles and the MMR vaccine, visit www.health.state.pa.us. Additional information is also available at www.health.montcopa.org and traveler's health information may be obtained at www.cdc.gov/travel.

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