

Measles Factsheet & FAQ

The county of Santa Clara Public Health Department confirmed one case of measles in an international traveler visiting the county. Individuals who are not immune to measles AND who visited the sites below (see Question 6) at the dates and times indicated may be at risk of developing measles due to exposure.

- The good news is that most people living in Santa Clara County have been vaccinated and are protected from measles.

1. What is the measles?

- Measles (a virus) is a highly contagious respiratory disease that is spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- **Measles symptoms start with a fever, runny nose, cough, and red eyes, and are followed by a rash that starts on the face and spreads all over the body.**

2. Who is at risk of getting measles if exposed?

- Babies too young to be vaccinated.
- Children or adults with abnormal immune systems.
- People with health problems that prevent them from being vaccinated.
- Pregnant people.
- Other children or adults who are unvaccinated.

3. Who is at high risk for severe illness and complications from measles if infected?

- Infants and children aged <5 years
- Adults aged >20 years
- Pregnant people
- People with compromised immune systems, such as from cancer, organ transplant, or certain medications

4. What should I do if I have symptoms of measles?

- **If you develop symptoms (see Question 1), call your doctor right away. It is very important to call ahead to any medical facility before going there and to tell them that you may have been exposed to measles so that the facility can take measures to protect other patients and visitors.**
- Your doctor's office will set a plan to provide medical care while making sure you don't expose others in the office.
- Wear a mask as soon as you enter a doctor's office, clinic, or hospital.
- Except for medical care, stay home and avoid contact with babies, pregnant people, and people with weakened immune systems until otherwise directed by your doctor or the Public Health Department.

5. How is measles spread?

- Measles is highly contagious. It is spread by tiny invisible droplets in the air left by someone who is sick with measles. These droplets disappear after about an hour, making the space safe to breathe again without risk of contracting measles.

6. How do I know if I was exposed to measles?

- Fortunately, because of high vaccination rates in Santa Clara County, it is unlikely for people to be exposed here. People are usually exposed when they travel to another country with low rates of vaccination. The measles patient visited several locations in Santa Clara County while they were contagious. If you visited one of these locations during the posted times, you may have been exposed to measles.
- Click here to review the locations and dates/times: [Review these locations](#).

7. What should I do if I think I was exposed?

- Determine if you are immune (protected) – see Question 8
- If you are immune, there is nothing further to do.
- If you are not immune or not sure, or someone at increased risk (see Question 2) call your Health Care Provider. Monitor for signs and symptoms of the measles – see Question 1 for signs and symptoms. Symptoms can show up 7-21 days after exposure.

8. How do I know if I am protected from the measles?

- Two doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine provide long-lasting protection against measles.
- If you are not sure if you have been vaccinated, your healthcare provider and/or school may have a record of your prior vaccination history
- Those who have previously been infected with measles are also protected from being infected with measles.
- There is a blood test that can show if you are immune to measles, either from vaccination or prior infection. Talk to your doctor about getting this test if you are unsure if you are vaccinated (or are instructed to do so.)
- Children are recommended to receive two (2) doses of MMR vaccine in their lifetime starting at age 12 months. If you were not vaccinated as a child, you can still be vaccinated as an adult.

9. Where can I go to get vaccinated?

- If you or your child has a regular healthcare provider, talk to him/her about getting vaccinated
- Primary Care clinics, Infectious Disease clinics, Travel Medicine & Immunization clinics, and Cardiovascular Health clinics provide the MMR vaccine
- Children and Youth: for a list of Community clinics in Santa Clara County that offer vaccination services for children and youth click here: [English/Spanish/Vietnamese](#)
- Adults: [Travel & Immunization Services](#) offers adults (>18 years of age) vaccinations, including the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine

10. What if I visited one of the at-risk locations at a different time?

- The measles virus stays in the air after a person with measles leaves for only up to an hour. The times announced to the press already include this hour after the infected person left, plus additional time for added safety. If you were in these locations outside of this time window, we have no reason to think you were exposed to measles.

11. Are there any other places where I could have been exposed?

- The Public Health Department continues to investigate the known case and anyone else at high risk for becoming sick. The published list includes the sites the individual visited for which there is public health concern. If any concerns for new sites of exposure arise, the Public Health Department will work to notify those who may have been exposed.

12. Could I have been exposed at the airport or during a flight?

- This person was not known to be contagious while at any airport or on any flight. The Public Health Dept is not releasing further information about their flight itinerary.

12. What can I do to prevent measles in general?

- Vaccination with two doses of MMR vaccine is a safe and effective way to prevent measles.

13. Can I give measles to my family if I was vaccinated, but was at the location/time when the measles?

- No, you cannot transmit measles unless you are sick/infected with the measles.

14. I am not sure if my family member is immune and my family member was possibly exposed. What should I look for?

- Contact your family member's health care provider. Watch for symptoms of the measles- see Question 1. Symptoms may show up 7-21 days after exposure.

Links and resources:

- March 26, 2019 Press Release, "Public Health Department Warns of Possible Measles Exposure"
<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/news/Pages/measles-3-26-19.aspx>
- CDC website with buttons for signs and symptoms, transmission, and frequently asked questions
<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/index.html>
- Measles Investigation Quick sheet: Document developed by CDPH and covers basic measles information (exposure, incubation, and infection/symptomology), information on Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), and information on Quarantines.
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Immunization/Measles-Quicksheet.pdf>
- Educational Resources for Parents and Childcare Providers (Web pages, IZ schedules, and other health education materials) <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/resources/parents-caregivers.html>
- Information for travelers <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/travelers.html>
- Information on Pregnancy and Measles <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/complications.html>