



MEMORANDUM

To: Local Health Departments, Regional Offices of Illinois Department of Public Health, Hospital Emergency Departments, Infection Control Preventionists and Infectious Disease Physicians

From: Communicable Disease Control Section

Subject: Measles Exposure in Northern Illinois

Date: May 20, 2016

A confirmed case of measles has been reported in Illinois. The case is a visitor from another country which has ongoing measles transmission. He had recently traveled to the Chicago, Evanston and DeKalb areas starting on May 12. The case developed a rash on May 14th, and was later confirmed to be measles via RT-PCR testing through the Illinois Department of Public Health laboratory.

The period of communicability for this case would have been from May 10th through May 18th. During this time period, the case was in several public locations while infectious so there could potentially be many exposures within the Chicago, Evanston and DeKalb communities. Actions are being taken to inform known contacts of this case in order to determine immunity status and provide recommendations for vaccination or immune globulin, in addition to determining locations of exposure. Additional information will become available as the investigation continues.

Healthcare providers and facilities should be alert for possible measles cases. Measles should be considered in any patient with a maculopapular rash that starts on the head/hairline and spreads down the body, fever, conjunctivitis, cough, coryza (cold symptoms), and malaise. Any hospitalized patient who is suspected of having measles should be immediately placed in airborne isolation. For infection control information, please see the CDC “Guideline for Isolation Precautions” at http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/2007IP/2007ip_part4.html. Unimmunized contacts of measles cases can be vaccinated within 3 days of exposure, or in certain special situations, given immune globulin within 6 days of exposure to prevent or reduce the severity of illness.

Please contact your local health department immediately if you suspect that a patient may have measles. In highly suspicious cases, health care providers should not wait for laboratory results before contacting their local health department. Laboratories should also report to their local health department positive lab tests for measles within 24 hours. In turn, local health departments should report cases to the IDPH Communicable Disease Section as soon as possible, but within the same time period.

Laboratory analysis should be completed on all suspect cases. Specimens submitted to IDPH must be facilitated by your local health department who will provide an authorization number for the specimens prior to shipment.

It is important for all individuals, especially those that work in the healthcare field, to have appropriate records on-hand to verify immune status of any vaccine-preventable diseases (vaccination records, proof of physician-diagnosed disease). An individual can attempt to locate their vaccination records through their healthcare providers or through any educational facility they have attended (e.g. high school, college/university).

Health care providers should know the afterhours contact information for their local health department in case they identify cases over weekends and holidays. Local health departments who identify cases over the weekend can call the IDPH afterhours number. If local health departments have any questions pertaining to this memo during work hours, please contact the Communicable Disease Control Section at 217-782-2016.