

HCSD Information Regarding Measles and Immunizations

February 10, 2015

The number of measles cases in California has grown to 91 since the end of December, and the disease has now shown up in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda counties.

Of the 91 cases in the state, most are linked to an initial exposure at Disneyland or Disney California Adventure Park in Anaheim in mid-December. Of the 10 Bay Area confirmed measles cases, three people in Alameda County contracted the disease while visiting Disney. The Department of Health is reporting that the people who have measles in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are not related to the Disney outbreak.

We want to reassure parents that there is no need to be alarmed. If your children have been vaccinated, they are 99% protected from catching measles. However, a measles outbreak serves as an important reminder that everyone, children and adults, does need to make certain they are either immune or have been vaccinated against measles. Vaccination is key to preventing the disease, and we recommend that everyone in the community review your vaccination records and consider getting the measles vaccination if needed.

Measles can be prevented by the combination MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends children get two doses: the first dose at 12-15 months of age, and the second dose at 4-6 years of age. Measles vaccination protects not only the person being vaccinated, but also the community around them, including babies less than 12 months old who are too young to be vaccinated.

Adolescents and adults also need to be up to date on vaccinations. People born before 1957 are considered immune as they likely had measles as children and developed natural immunity. If you have any questions about your vaccination status, consult your doctor, who may elect to give you another MMR shot or perform a blood test to check for immunity to measles.

Measles spreads very easily by air and by direct contact. Simply being in the same room with someone who has measles is sufficient to become infected. ***Please do not send your student to school with a fever or undiagnosed rash.***

If a case of measles is diagnosed in the district, we will follow California Public Health Department guidelines. For parents whose students have not been vaccinated, you may be asked to keep your child out of school and other organized activities. We will tell you when it is safe for your child to return to school. Be prepared to keep your child home for several days or up to several weeks.

Signs and Symptoms of Measles

8-12 days after exposure (but can be as many as 21 days after exposure):

- Mild to moderate fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red eyes
- Fever spikes after 2-3 days, often as high as 104°-105°F
- Red, blotchy rash appears on face, along hairline and behind ears
- Rash spreads to chest, back, thighs and feet

Most students with measles will likely miss at least one week of school.

For more information about measles, please visit the [San Mateo County Public Health Department](#) and “measles,” and see the [CDC's measles information page](#).