

Top Things Parents Need to Know About the Measles

The CDC recently published the Measles Cases for 2019 and the numbers are alarmingly high. The dates of the outbreak are recorded from January 1st to the 31st, with the data updated weekly. New York is experiencing several outbreaks throughout the state, including the lower Hudson Valley and parts of New York City. Rockland County, as of February 20, 2019 has 138 confirmed reported cases of measles.

What are the Measles?

Measles is an infectious disease caused by a virus and is easily spread through coughing and sneezing. Measles will often start with a high fever, coughing, a runny nose, and red watery eyes. Tiny white spot (koplik spots) may appear in the mouth two or three days after symptoms begin. After, a rash will occur that spreads over the whole body, which is the symptom best known for measles. The rash typically begins as flat red spots covering the body, which will then become raised bumps over the spots. The rash will often join together as they spread further down the body. As the rash occurs, a fever may spike to more than 104 degrees. For infants, this is especially concerning. It is recommended adults seek help from their doctor if their temperature is 103 F or higher.

What Parents Need to Know

- 1) Measles can be very serious and cause severe health complications. 1 in 4 people in the U.S will be hospitalized from the measles. Some complications include, diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, or in some cases, a brain infection that can lead to permanent brain damage.
- 2) Measles is very contagious. There is a high chance of catching the measles by being in the same room as someone infected who coughs or sneezes. Avoid bringing your child places you know or suspect have been infected by the measles.
- 3) Your child can still get measles in the U.S. Unfortunately, a common misbelief is that because the measles was declared eliminated from the U.S in 2000, this means the disease is no longer in the country. However, because the measles is still prevalent in other countries, it is possible to bring it back to the U.S when traveling and spreading it that way. So even if you or your family doesn't travel, someone in your neighborhood could have contracted the measles when traveling and brought it back.
- 4) You have the power to protect your child against measles. The Measles, Mumps, and Rubella Vaccine is very safe and very effective. The MMR vaccine is a long-lasting protection against all strains of measles and it is recommended your child receive 2 doses, the first at 12-15 months of age and the second at 4-6 years of age.

What Can You Do to Protect Your Child?

While there is no known cure for measles, the best way to prevent your child from catching the measles is to have them vaccinated with the safe and effective measles-mumps-rubella vaccine. The Measles are highly contagious, so it is best to protect your child by having them vaccinated and preventing the measles from possibly spreading.

Community Care Physicians

Here at Community Care Physician's, we strongly encourage speaking with your doctor about the measles vaccine. If you are in need of a primary care physician, our Concierge Care Coordinator would be more than happy to direct you to the best provider. Call today at (518) 782-3800.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/cases-outbreaks.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/signs-symptoms.html>

<https://medlineplus.gov/measles.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/parents-top4.html>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fever/symptoms-causes/syc-20352759>

<https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2170/>