



PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE
Potential Measles Exposure

July 1, 2008

The Southern Nevada Health District has learned that a visitor to Southern Nevada on June 20-21 was recently diagnosed with a laboratory-confirmed case of the measles.

The risk of disease is low for persons previously vaccinated against measles or diagnosed with the disease. However, because individuals who are not immune to measles might have been exposed during the patient's visit, the health district is alerting the community of the possibility of measles transmission so that Valley residents have an opportunity to receive measles immunization and so that anyone who develops measles symptoms will seek medical attention.

Measles can be spread among susceptible people and can result in serious infections resulting in pneumonia, encephalitis, seizures, and death. Many people born before 1957 had the disease in childhood and younger people are routinely vaccinated against it.

Symptoms can begin about 10 days after exposure to the virus. An infected patient has a fever that can last two to four days and can peak as high as 103° F to 105° F. A runny nose, cough and/or red eyes follow and about 14 days after exposure the telltale rash appears; the rash can last five to six days. It begins at the hairline, moves to the face and neck and eventually reaches the hands and feet. Measles can be spread approximately four days before the rash appears and up to five days after.

People who have had the measles or have been adequately immunized against it are protected.

Immunity can be determined by a blood test. People are considered immune if:

- they were born before 1957 as many of them had the disease as a child;
- they were born on or after Jan. 1, 1957 and have documentation of two doses of measles vaccine administered at least one month apart since 1968, with the first dose given on or after the first birthday (measles vaccines used prior to 1968 do not always provide reliable immunity); or
- a blood test for measles antibody is positive.

For more information about health district immunization clinics call 759-0850. Immunizations are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at the following district public health centers:

- Ravenholt Public Health Center, 625 Shadow Lane, Las Vegas
- East Las Vegas Public Health Center, 560 N. Nellis Blvd., Suite E12, Las Vegas
- Henderson Public Health Center, 520 E. Lake Mead Parkway, Henderson
- North Las Vegas Public Health Center, 1820 E. Lake Mead Blvd., Suite F, North Las Vegas
- Spring Valley Public Health Center, 6330 W. Spring Mountain Rd., Ste. C, Las Vegas

(All services at Spring Valley, including immunizations, are available by appointment only. Call 759-0701)