



Skagit County Public Health

Jennifer Johnson, Director
Howard Leibrand, M.D., Health Officer

January 31, 2019

Dear Parent or Guardian:

A large measles outbreak is happening in Clark County, southwest Washington. Additionally, King County just confirmed a measles case. So far, we've received NO reports of measles in Skagit County.

Measles is not a normal childhood illness. It's a serious disease that can cause brain, spinal cord and lung infections—or even death. Measles is very contagious. It spreads easily through the air and can stay in the air 2 hours after an infected person leaves an area.

For more information on the signs and symptoms of measles, and what you should do if you think you or your child may be experiencing measles symptoms, please see the attached measles fact sheet. If your child does not have the appropriate number of MMR vaccines and does not have a letter of exemption, you will be notified by the school and provided with more information on what you can do to protect your child.

To prevent measles, all it takes is 1 shot at 12 to 15 months of age and a second shot at 4 to 6 years of age to get 97% effective prevention. People not vaccinated on schedule can get 1 shot now and a second shot 1 month later.

Some children can't get the measles vaccine for medical reasons. Some children don't get the measles vaccine for personal or religious reasons. **If a case of measles occurs in school or an outbreak occurs in the community, children who do not meet school MMR vaccination requirements can't go to school until the disease is under control.**

The measles vaccine is safe and effective. We recommend your whole family be vaccinated. Contact your healthcare provider to determine your vaccination status and take steps to get up to date on your vaccines. Skagit County has no current cases of measles – and only you can help it stay that way.

For more information about measles, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/measles/index.html> or call Skagit County Public Health at (360) 416-1500.

Thank you,

Skagit County Public Health.

MEASLES

MEASLES IS A SERIOUS DISEASE

Measles is a serious disease that causes a rash and fever.

Measles is very contagious. It spreads when a person with measles breathes out, coughs or sneezes.

Anyone who is not vaccinated is much more likely to get measles.

Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. It can cause swelling of the brain and lung infections. In rare cases, it can be deadly.



VACCINATION IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY

The MMR shot is safe and very effective at preventing measles. It also protects against mumps and rubella.

Doctors recommend that all children get the MMR shot.

Getting the MMR vaccine is safer than getting measles.

Most children do not have any side effects from the shot. The side effects that do occur are usually mild and don't last long, such as a fever, mild rash, and soreness.



Images: cdc.gov

MMR VACCINE DOES NOT CAUSE AUTISM

No studies have found a link between autism and the MMR vaccine. This has been carefully studied by many doctors and scientists from around the world.

Scientists are studying what makes a child more likely to have autism. Most scientists agree that autism probably results from a combination of family genes and events before and after birth. This could include the age of the parents at the time of birth, illness of the mother during pregnancy, or difficulties at birth. They are also studying connections between autism and where a person lives.

Ask your doctor if you have questions about measles or MMR vaccine.

For more information:
www.kingcounty.gov/measles

Public Health
Seattle & King County



Washington State Department of
Health

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE MEASLES

Symptoms of measles and how it spreads

Measles often begins with a high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. After 3-5 days, a rash usually begins on the face and spreads to other parts of the body.

You can spread measles to others as early as four days *before* you have a rash and for up to four days *after* the rash first appeared.

You can get measles just by being in a room where a person with measles has been. The measles virus stays in the air for up to two hours after that person has left the room.

Call your doctor or clinic right away if you see symptoms

Your doctor or clinic will let you know if you need to come in for a visit.

Measles is very contagious and you don't want to give it to someone in a waiting room. It's important to tell your doctor or clinic that you have symptoms of measles **before** you go. They will give you instructions for what to do so that you don't spread measles.

Stay at home if you have measles

It's important not to spread measles to others.

Stay at home if you have measles. Don't go to school, work, to the store, or other people's homes.

Don't have visitors to your home if you or your child have a fever or rash.

For more information: www.kingcounty.gov/measles