

Jan. 26, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian/Child Care Provider:

Measles cases have been reported in Maricopa County. These cases have been linked to California Disneyland measles outbreak, which has been in the news.

Measles is a very infectious disease that can spread quickly through the air when the infected person coughs and sneezes. The Measles virus can survive in the air for several hours and may be transmitted to unvaccinated individuals even after the infected person left the room.

Measles starts with a fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat. It is followed by a rash that starts on the head at the hairline and moves down the body. Complications such as pneumonia, ear infections and diarrhea can occur in about 30% of people infected and 1-2 in 1000 experience severe complications such as inflammation around the brain or death. Complications are more common in very young children and adults.

What can you do?

1. Make sure your child's immunizations are up to date. The MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine is safe and very effective in preventing measles infection. Two doses are routinely recommended for all children. Children should receive their first dose of MMR vaccine at 12 – 15 months of age and their second dose routinely at 4 -6 years of age. If you child has not received the recommended doses, contact your health care provider as soon as possible to arrange for immunizations. If you do not have a health care provider you can go to the following web site to locate an immunization clinic near where you live: http://www.mcchip.org/Immunization_Clinics.php. Or contact Maricopa County Department of Public Health at 602-506-6767.
2. Child care programs can obtain additional information about required immunizations, to include a copy of the Referral Notice of Required Immunizations, from the ADHS Immunization Web site at: <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/documents/school-childcare/requirements-referral-notice-childcare-preschool.pdf>
3. Up-to-date vaccinations are required by law for entry into childcare and school, to include MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) by age 12 to 15 months and a second dose between the ages of 4 to 6 years of age. By Arizona Law, a medical exemption form must be on file for any child who is not able to be immunized due to health or medical condition. These forms are available at: <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/school-childcare/requirements.htm>.

4. **If your child has not received at least one dose of MMR and is exposed to measles, he/she may be excluded from attending school or child care to prevent further spread of disease.**

5. Child care programs and schools are required by law to report measles to their local health department. In Maricopa County, contact Disease Surveillance staff at 602-506-6767 or fax to 602-372-8935. More information is available at this web site:
<http://www.maricopa.gov/publichealth/Services/DiseaseReporting/default.aspx>

More information:

Arizona Regulations: Arizona Revised Statutes 15-873, <http://www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/15/00873.htm>, and Arizona Administrative Code, R9-5-305, http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_09/9-05.htm, and R9-6-706, http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_09/9-06.htm describe the requirements for medical exemptions in childcare and school settings.

<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/school-childcare/requirements.htm>

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

<http://www.maricopa.gov/publichealth/Programs/Measles/default.aspx>

On behalf of Maricopa County Department of Public Health, we thank you for helping to keep our community healthy and safe.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Sunenshine, MD
Medical Director, Disease Control Division