

Jan. 30, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian:

At this time, there have been NO cases of measles identified at your student's school. The following letter is intended to inform you of steps to take protect your child from becoming infected with measles and what would occur if a case is identified at your child's school. Measles cases have been reported in Maricopa County. These cases have been linked to the California Disneyland measles outbreak, which has been in the news.

Measles is a very infectious disease that can spread quickly through the air. 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?

- Make sure your student'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 your student 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.
- Up-to-date immunizations 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 valid exemption form must be on file for any student who is attending school and not up to date on immunizations. These forms are available at: <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/school-childcare/requirements.htm>.

- **If your student has not received any doses of MMR and is exposed to measles, he/she will be excluded from attending school for 21 days in order to prevent further spread of disease. If your student is exposed to measles and is required to have two doses of MMR based on age but has only received one dose, he/she will be excluded from school for 21 days or until the time the student provides proof of immunity with a measles titer.**
- You can obtain additional information about **immunizations required for school** from the Arizona Department of Health Services Immunization Web site at:
<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/documents/school-childcare/2014-2015-school-year-immunization-requirements.pdf> <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/documents/school-childcare/referral-notice-inadequate-immunization.pdf>
- Schools and child care programs are required by law to report measles to their local health department. In Maricopa County, immediately contact Disease Surveillance staff at 602-506-6767. 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, and Arizona Administrative Code R9-6-706, http://www.azsos.gov/public_services/Title_09/9-06.htm describe the requirements for immunization exemptions in school and childcare settings.

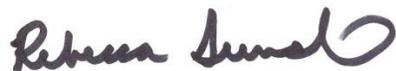
<http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/immunization/school-childcare/requirements.htm>

<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