

Measles Health Alert

2024

Measles cases have recently reported in multiple states and a measles outbreak is currently occurring in Illinois. Measles is highly contagious.

Please protect patients, visitors, and staff!



Keep an eye out for measles symptoms

Suspect measles in patients with:

- fever and rash
- travel to an area affected by a measles outbreak, history of international travel in the past 3 weeks, contact with international visitors, or exposure to a known case.

Prodrome

- Mild to moderate fever
- Cough
- Coryza (runny nose)
- Conjunctivitis (red and watery eyes)

Rash onset

- Fever spikes, often as high as 104° to 105° F
- Red, maculopapular rash that may become confluent—typically starts at hairline, then face, and spreads rapidly down body
- Koplik's spots (tiny blue/white spots on the bright red background of the buccal mucosa) may be present



Note: A history of 2 doses of MMR vaccine does not exclude a measles diagnosis.



Act immediately if you suspect measles—don't wait for a positive laboratory test!

- Immediately mask and isolate patient. Implement airborne infection control precautions. If available, place in a negative pressure room or room with a HEPA filter and transfer if such a room is not available.
- Permit only staff immune to measles (2 documented doses of MMR or lab evidence of IgG immunity) to be near and care for the patient.
- Notify the local health department immediately.* Your health department can help arrange for testing at IDPH, provide guidance on appropriate isolation, and help monitor patients after they leave the facility.
- If you cannot reach your local health department, call Illinois' 24/7 emergency number (217-782-7860) and ask for the IDPH duty officer.
- All regular exam rooms (without negative pressure) should be closed for 2 hours after a suspected measles patient has left the room; cleaning should occur after the closure window.
- Testing: Send serum to commercial lab for serologic testing (Measles IgM and IgG) AND send throat or NP swab in viral transport media for PCR testing at IDPH lab; contact your local health department for approval and guidance on testing.
- Safeguard other facilities: assure airborne infection control precautions before referring or transferring patients.

Photo is courtesy of CDC's Public Health Image Library.