



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. BOX 3378  
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

January 16, 2019

**MEDICAL ADVISORY: MEASLES AMONG VISITORS ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII**

Dear Healthcare Provider,

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) investigated two imported cases of confirmed measles (rubeola) on the Big Island. The cases occurred in two unvaccinated visitors, who were exposed in their home state to an infected international guest. Although the visitors were advised to remain isolated and likelihood of exposure to others is low, providers should be aware the period of infectivity while in Hawaii ranged from January 4–13, 2019. Providers are therefore advised to be alert for persons with rash illness and consider and report potential measles infection especially in unimmunized persons, who present with fever  $\geq 101^{\circ}\text{F}$ ; cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis; and generalized maculopapular rash.

Measles is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread and is highly contagious. The virus can remain infectious in the air up to two hours after an infected person leaves the area. Persons with measles are contagious from 4 days before through 4 days after rash onset, and susceptible persons may develop rash approximately 14 days after exposure (range 7–21 days).

*If* a person with potential measles infection presents in your office:

- Promptly isolate to avoid disease transmission and place a mask on the patient
- Immediately report the potential infection to HDOH
- Collect a throat or nasopharyngeal swab for RT-PCR (place synthetic swab in 1–3 mL of viral transport media (keep cold [ $4^{\circ}\text{C}$ ])).

Please ensure your patients and staff are protected against measles by confirming:

- All patients without contraindications are age-appropriately vaccinated
- All staff have presumptive evidence of immunity to measles (keep documentation in an easily retrievable location)
  - Two valid, documented doses of measles-containing vaccine
  - Laboratory evidence of immunity (i.e., measles specific IgG)/confirmation of disease

**\*\* This message contains privileged communication between the Department of Health and clinicians and should not be shared with or forwarded to those not included among the original recipients. \*\***

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Health care workers without evidence of immunity must be excluded from day 5 after first exposure through day 21 following last exposure, ***regardless of receipt of post-exposure prophylaxis.***

Measles is an URGENT CATEGORY NOTIFIABLE CONDITION. Please report any suspected case of measles. Do NOT wait for laboratory confirmation:

Oahu (Disease Reporting Line).....(808) 586-4586  
Maui District Health Office.....(808) 984-8213  
Kauai District Health Office.....(808) 241-3563  
Big Island District Health Office (Hilo).....(808) 933-0912  
Big Island District Health Office (Kona) .....(808) 322-4877  
After hours on Oahu .....(808) 600-3625  
After hours on neighbor islands .....(800) 360-2575 (toll free)

We appreciate your assistance in protecting the health of Hawaii's residents and visitors.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP  
State Epidemiologist  
Hawaii Department of Health

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