



January 28, 2019

To: Jefferson County Health Care Providers
From: Tom Locke, MD, MPH, Jefferson County Health Officer

Washington State Measles Outbreak Update:

Measles outbreaks continue to occur in multiple European countries with over 40,000 cases reported in the first half of 2018 alone; approximately half of the cases in the WHO European Region have been in the Ukraine. Approximately 900 cases have been reported in Israel. We are advising providers to suspect measles in any unimmunized patient with fever and rash.

Washington State currently has 35 confirmed measles cases, 34 in Clark County and 1 in King County. Oregon has one confirmed case in the Portland area. On January 25, 2019, Governor Inslee declared a state of emergency in Washington State with respect to the measles outbreak in order to mobilize resources for what could become a much larger outbreak. Multiple public exposures have occurred in Clark and King Counties. New cases, if they should occur, should start appearing in the next 1-2 weeks.

Guidance for measles diagnosis and testing

Actions requested: Review the following recommendations:

- Consider measles in patients who present with a **febrile rash illness**, especially among patients that are unimmunized, have unknown measles immunization status, or had possible exposure to another measles case. Measles should be highly suspected in persons with fever and maculopapular rash and any of the following: cough, coryza (runny nose), and/or conjunctivitis (red eyes).
 - Cases of measles are occurring concurrently to the influenza/respiratory virus season and it is possible to see rashes with these viruses; consider testing for these viruses.
 - If measles is suspected, mask and isolate the patient (in negative air pressure room when possible)
 - Call Jefferson County Public Health at (360) 385-9400 to arrange testing at the WA State Public Health Laboratories. All health care providers must receive approval from LHJ prior to submission.
 - Collect the following specimens for measles testing:
 - Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab for rubeola PCR and culture (preferred respiratory specimen)**
 - Swab the posterior nasal passage with a Dacron™ or rayon swab and place the swab in 2–3 ml of viral transport medium. Store specimen in refrigerator and transport on ice.
 - Throat swab also acceptable.
 - Urine for rubeola PCR and culture**
 - Collect at least 50 ml of clean voided urine in a sterile container and store in refrigerator.
 - Serum for rubeola IgM and IgG testing**
 - Draw at least 4-5 ml blood (yields about 1.5 ml serum) in a red or tiger top (serum separator) tube. Store specimen in refrigerator and transport on ice.
- Specimens for measles testing **SHOULD NOT BE COLLECTED** prior to onset of a rash
 - If patients present with known measles exposure and viral prodrome, providers should ask patients to stay away from all public settings, monitor themselves for rash onset and either:
 - Return to the clinic for specimen collection once a rash occurs (instruct patient to call prior to arrival to allow isolation), OR
 - Self-collect urine at the time of rash onset (send a urine cup home with the patient with instructions)

- **Report all suspected measles cases immediately by calling (360) 385-9400.** State and Local Public Health specialists are available for consultation about testing of suspected measles cases.

Reminders:

- During an outbreak of measles, health-care facilities should require all health-care personnel have documentation of 2 doses of MMR vaccine or laboratory evidence of measles immunity or laboratory confirmation of disease regardless of birth year.

Cases of measles have been reported from Clark and King counties; a list of public exposure locations for each county is available here:

<https://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/measles-investigation>

<https://publichealthinsider.com/2019/01/23/measles-investigation-in-king-county/>

Resources

Washington State Department of Health

Measles assessment checklist for providers: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/348-490-MeaslesAssessmentQuicksheetProviders.docx>

Measles guideline: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/Measles>

CDC measles

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

CDC Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Patients

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/index.html>

For questions, please contact Jefferson County Public Health at (360)385-9400