



BONITA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Re: Information About Measles

California is experiencing a large measles outbreak that was triggered by an exposure of measles at the Disneyland Parks in December 2014. A number of Los Angeles County residents have developed measles and more cases will likely occur among people who have had contact with persons who were infected. We have provided the following information to answer questions that you may have about measles and to help protect you and your family against this disease.

What is measles?

Measles is a disease that is caused by a virus. Symptoms include a high fever, cough, runny nose, red and watery eyes, and a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body. Measles can cause ear infections, diarrhea and serious illness such as pneumonia and encephalitis (swelling around the brain). Although rare, it can lead to death.

Most people who have never been vaccinated against or sick with the measles will get it if they have contact with someone who has measles. The virus can spread very easily when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It can also stay in the air and on surfaces for hours. So, you can be infected by being in a room that an infected person was in or by touching an object that they've touched. This is why it is so important for you and your family to be vaccinated.

How can you prevent measles?

Getting vaccinated is the best way to keep from getting and spreading the measles. People should get the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine if they haven't been vaccinated or don't know if they were. MMR vaccines are very effective and can prevent almost all cases of measles. Children should receive their first dose of MMR vaccine at 12-15 months of age and a second dose at 4-6 years of age. All adolescents and adults born after 1956 who haven't been vaccinated should also be vaccinated.

If you have not been vaccinated, call your doctor to get the MMR vaccine, which may be covered by your insurance. Families who do not have a regular health care provider or health insurance that covers vaccines can visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/IZclinics/clinics.htm> or call the Los Angeles County Information Line at 2-1-1 for referrals to providers offering vaccines at no-cost or a reduced cost.

If you think that your child or someone in your family has been exposed to or has measles, contact your doctor's office right away. Tell them that your child might have measles before you go, so they can take steps to prevent other patients and staff from being exposed. If your child has measles or have been exposed to someone with measles outside of school (work), please notify your child's health office.

Are measles vaccines required to attend school?

Yes. California law requires that students receive measles vaccines to attend school. (California Health and Safety Code, Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1, Sections 120325-120380) unless you have a valid vaccination waiver form on file with your school's health office. If there is a case of measles at your child's school, children who are not vaccinated may be excluded from attending school. This is for their protection and to prevent the spread of measles.

If you have additional questions, please contact your school's health office.

Bonita Unified School District

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