Possible Measles in Santa Barbara County

Santa Barbara County has a possible case of measles. Due to the particular situation in this case, additional confirmatory testing will need to be conducted. In the interim, based on the highly contagious nature of this virus, the Public Health Department is taking an abundance of caution to protect those at high risk of contracting the disease.

The Public Health Department initiated a number of actions to prevent the spread of this highly contagious disease and protect the community including:

- Provided vaccine for members of the household and quarantined them to their home
- Initiated contact tracing to identify individuals who may have been exposed
- Coordinated with health facilities and providers involved with the ill to identify exposed and identify immunity of those exposed
- Gathered specimens and facilitated laboratory testing
- Excluding high risk individuals from work and/or school to protect against possible spread of the disease

Every person who was in close contact or close airspace is being identified and contacted by the Public Health Department. This is a core public health function. The department coordinates with local health care providers to assure those at risk are identified, screened and treated as needed.

From January 1 to January 26, 2015, 73 people in the state of California were reported to have measles. Most of these cases are part of a large ongoing outbreak linked to Disney amusement parks in California. The source of the Santa Barbara County measles case(s) has not yet been determined.

About three out of ten people who get measles will develop one or more complications. Complications are more common in adults and young children.

We recommend that residents take the following steps to remain healthy, avoid measles and other vaccine preventable communicable diseases:

- Get vaccinations for children in a timely way as recommended by CDC
- If a household member is a young child, it is essential that others in the household get vaccinated to protect the young who are not old enough to have all recommended vaccinations
- Adults over the age of 19 and born in or after 1957 are recommended to get one to two doses of Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR)
- Individuals with the following conditions should NOT get the vaccine: pregnancy, weakened immune system, HIV
People are **not** at high risk if they:
- Were born prior to 1957, or
- Have a history of physician diagnosed measles, or
- Served in the armed forces, or
- Have written documentation with dates of receipt of at least one dose of measles containing vaccine
- Have documented IgG+ test for measles

Dr. Charity Thoman, Health Officer, noted “There are a number of respiratory viruses and rashes going around now. It is likely we will continue to see possible cases that need to be determined through laboratory testing.”

Individuals who may have been exposed to the confirmed measles cases in Santa Barbara County will be contacted.

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