



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL CENTER

April 15, 2009

Dear Child Care Provider:

It is important that you read the attached letter from Dr. Tillman, Montgomery County Health Officer and the Fact Sheet about measles and **share them with your parents/guardians.**

Evidence that children 12 months of age and older have had the measles vaccination is required before a child is enrolled in your program. Children 5 years of age and older are required to have two measles vaccinations. Please review the immunization records of the children enrolled in your program to confirm that they have had the appropriate **vaccinations.**

Remember if a child or an adult is not vaccinated and gets a high fever and rash, do *NOT* walk into an emergency room, clinic or physician's office. Call ahead to tell them you are coming and alert them that the patient is unvaccinated and may have measles so they can give you instructions to prevent the exposure of others in the waiting room.

Please contact me at 240-777-3128 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Nancy M. Curtis RN, BS, CCHC
Child Care Health Consultant
Montgomery County HHS
Early Childhood Services

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma S. Ahluwalia
Director

April 15, 2009

To Parents and Guardians:

You may have heard that there is a measles outbreak in Montgomery County. This letter is to discuss your child's risk of contracting measles and to give you other information about measles. Measles are also called rubeola or red measles.

All children who have had two doses of the measles vaccination (MMR) are not considered at risk for measles. This means those children will not get measles even if they are exposed to someone with measles. Evidence that children 12 months of age and older have had the measles vaccination is required before they enter child care. That record should be on file with your daycare provider as well as your healthcare provider.

Children who have not been vaccinated because they have a religious or medical exemption and have not had the measles **are at risk of contracting measles if they are exposed**. If there is a case of measles in your daycare, and your child is susceptible, your child may be excluded from child care. Under normal circumstances, the risk that your child would be exposed to measles is very low. The last measles case in Montgomery County before the current outbreak occurred in 1993. However, these are not normal circumstances and your child's risk is increased.

Measles is a highly contagious disease. It is spread by coughs or sneezes of an infected person. **The virus can be spread for four days before a person sees a rash or has other symptoms and can remain in the air for up to two hours** after the infected person has left the area. Measles can cause serious health problems including pneumonia, seizures, even meningitis.

If your child is not vaccinated and gets a high fever and rash, do NOT walk into an emergency room or into your physician's office. Call ahead to tell them you are coming and alert them that your child is unvaccinated and may have measles so they can give you instructions to prevent your child from exposing others in the waiting room.

Free vaccinations are available at various locations in Montgomery County. Please call 240-777-1050 for information on times and locations.

Sincerely,

Ulder J. Tillman, M.D., M.P.H.
Chief, Public Health Services

Public Health Services

Measles Fact Sheet

Measles is a highly contagious rash illness caused by a virus.

Though measles is relatively rare in the United States, it remains a leading cause of death among young children worldwide. Measles is usually thought of as a childhood disease, but people of any age can get it. Complications of measles include diarrhea, otitis media (inflammation of the middle ear), pneumonia (lung infection), encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), seizures, and death. Complications are most common in children younger than 5 years of age and adults 20 years of age and older.

Measles is spread from person-to-person by airborne droplets and direct contact with infected respiratory secretions.

The highly contagious virus can be found in the air after someone who is infected with measles coughs or sneezes. The virus can also be spread by direct contact with infected nasal or throat secretions. The virus can remain contagious on surfaces for up to 2 hours. A person can spread measles from 4 days before to 4 days after the rash develops. Anyone with measles should not attend childcare, school, work, or other public places until they are no longer contagious.

Symptoms to look for include:

- Rash that starts on the face and neck and then spreads. The rash fades in the order in which it appears.
- High fever
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Cough (sometimes like Croup)
- Small red spots, with blue and white centers inside the mouth (Koplik spots)

Symptoms such as fever, cough, and watery eyes may occur within 8 to 12 days after exposure. It usually takes 14 days (range 7-18 days) after exposure to develop a rash.

Laboratory testing is needed to confirm a measles infection.

People who think they have measles should contact a doctor or local health department **immediately** to be tested. Measles is diagnosed by a history of exposure to the disease, symptoms, and laboratory testing of the blood.

There is no specific treatment for measles.

Care of patients with measles consists mainly of providing good nutrition and fluids. Antibiotics may be prescribed for treating eye or ear infections, and acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever.

A person in close contact with someone who has measles should be notified of the exposure, determine if they are susceptible to getting measles, and treated if necessary. Vaccine given within 72 hours of measles exposure may provide protection from developing measles in some cases. Treatment with a product called Immune Globulin (IG) may prevent measles if given within 6 days of exposure. Check with your doctor or local health department for advice. Close contacts may include:

- Persons who live in the same house;
- Persons who have done medical treatments such as mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or intubation;
- Close social contacts in child and daycare settings, schools, work, or extracurricular activities; or
- Persons who were exposed during travel to countries in which measles is endemic.

Measles can be prevented with a measles vaccine.

2 doses of measles vaccine are recommended for children starting at 12 to 15 months of age. The vaccine is given as part of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. A 2nd dose of measles vaccine, usually given as MMR vaccine, is now required for all Maryland school children in Kindergarten through Grade 12. The 2nd dose may be given at any age at least 4 weeks after the 1st dose. Women should not get the vaccine if they are pregnant or plan to get pregnant within 4 weeks after getting the vaccine. For additional information about measles vaccine, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/Pubs/vis/default.htm>.

¿Qué es el sarampión?

Sarampión es una enfermedad causada por el virus de la rubéola, a veces llamado "granuja", "roja" o "sarampión de 10 días".

¿Quién contrae el sarampión?

El virus de la rubéola puede infectar a cualquier persona de cualquier edad que no haya tenido antes la enfermedad o la vacuna.

¿Cómo se contagia el sarampión?

Partículas aéreas de la tos o estornudo transmiten el virus. Se contagia fácil y rápidamente.

¿Cuándo aparecen los síntomas después de exponerse?

Toma unos 8-12 días hasta que aparecen los síntomas como de resfrío y 14 días para el salpullido.

¿Cuáles son los signos y síntomas del sarampión?

La enfermedad comienza con signos y síntomas de resfrío incluyendo tos, mocos en la nariz, temperatura alta y ojos rojos y lagrimosos. El segundo día después del inicio, aparece un salpullido rojo pinto en el borde del cabello de la cabeza y se disemina por el cuerpo hacia los brazos y piernas. El salpullido desaparece en el mismo orden en que apareció (de cabeza a pies) en unos 5 a 6 días.

¿Cómo pueden asegurar los padres que la enfermedad que tienen sus hijos es sarampión?

La única manera segura de determinar si la enfermedad es realmente sarampión es mediante análisis de sangre.

¿Cuándo y por cuánto tiempo puede la persona contagiar el sarampión?

El sarampión se puede transmitir desde un día antes del inicio de los síntomas de resfrío hasta el cuarto día del salpullido.

¿Cuáles son las complicaciones asociadas con el sarampión?

Entre los niños con sarampión, más o menos el 10% tiene infección de oídos, más o menos el 5% tiene neumonía, y más o menos 0.1% (1 en 1000 casos) desarrollará encefalitis (inflamación del cerebro que puede causar sordera o retardo mental) y más o menos 0.1% a 0.2% (1 a 2 en 1000 casos) morirá de la enfermedad.

¿Hay tratamiento para el sarampión?

No hay tratamiento específico para el sarampión.

¿Se puede prevenir el sarampión?

Sí. La vacuna contra el sarampión (usualmente en combinación con la vacuna contra rubéola y paperas se llama sarampión, paperas y rubéola ó MMR en inglés) se recomienda a todos los niños de 12 a 15 meses de edad y nuevamente a los 4 a 6 años de edad. Las dos dosis de la vacuna normalmente proveen inmunidad por vida.

¿Queda inmune por vida una persona que ha tenido antes infección de sarampión?

Sí