



COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

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MEASLES OUTBREAK IN ORANGE COUNTY MMR VACCINATION HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

(Santa Ana) – Orange County has twenty-one confirmed cases of measles in 2014, the most reported by any county in California. The Health Care Agency expects that the measles outbreak will continue to spread, and reminds the public that the best way to prevent the measles is by getting vaccinated.

Five of the 21 cases have been children, none of them immunized. Five have been healthcare workers who became ill after exposure to measles cases. The Health Care Agency will take every precaution to prevent outbreaks in health care facilities, schools and daycare facilities. Unimmunized children, school and daycare staff, and healthcare workers who are exposed to the measles will be instructed to stay home for up to 21 days after exposure.

Measles is a highly contagious and potentially severe disease that causes fever, rash, cough, and red, watery eyes. Measles spreads very easily by air and by direct contact with an infected person. People are contagious from approximately four days before the rash appears through four days after the rash appears. **Anyone suspecting they have measles should CALL their medical provider BEFORE arriving at the medical office to avoid exposing others to the measles virus.**

Two doses of the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine are very protective; individuals who have not received two doses of MMR vaccine may be at risk of infection. Vaccination is especially important for children, health care workers, adolescents and adults who have not been adequately vaccinated, and people planning foreign travel. The MMR vaccine is widely available from medical providers throughout Orange County. A list of free and low-cost vaccinations is available on the [Health Care Agency website](#).

Protect Yourself and Family from Measles:

- Children should receive their first MMR vaccine at 12-15 months of age. The second dose of MMR is given at 4 to 6 years of age before going to school.
- Vaccinating children, adolescents and adults is the best way to protect infants who are too young to receive the MMR vaccine.
- Vaccinations are very safe. The benefits far outweigh any risks. Side effects are usually mild, such as soreness where the shot was given.
- Measles is found in many parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Vaccination before traveling is recommended. Learn more about measles by visiting the [Health Care Agency](#) or [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) websites.

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