



## **News for Immediate Release**

**July 26, 2011**

### **Department of Health Announces Possible Measles Exposure in Berks, Bucks, Delaware and Lehigh Counties**

**Harrisburg** –The state Department of Health is advising the public of potential exposure to a case of measles in Berks, Bucks, Delaware and Lehigh counties.

This possible exposure is in direct link to the July 11 exposure previously reported at the Rite Aid Drug Store, 3145 Main St., in Morgantown, Berks County.

A person who has been diagnosed as possibly having measles may have exposed other people to the disease on the following dates at these locations and times:

#### **Berks County:**

- BB's Grocery Outlet, 6180 Morgantown Road (Old MOM's Mall) on Tuesday, July 19, between 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.;
- Chick-fil-A, 4675 Perkiomen Ave., Exeter Township on Thursday, July 21 from 6:30 p.m. to 11:45 p.m.

#### **Delaware County:**

- Starbucks, 443 E. Baltimore Pike, Media on Friday, July 22 from 7:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

#### **Lehigh County:**

- KNBT Bank, 235 Main St., Emmaus on Friday, July 22 from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.;
- PA Wine & Spirits Store, 1325 Chestnut St., Emmaus on Friday, July 22 from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

#### **Bucks County:**

- Hot Spot Restaurant, Old Dublin Pike, Doylestown on Friday, July 22 from 6 p.m. to closing.

Although most people in the United States are immune to measles, either because they received the Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine in childhood or because they were exposed to measles prior to the use of vaccines, the following groups of individuals are at risk of becoming infected with measles if exposed:

- Infants less than one year of age who are too young to have received the MMR vaccine;
- Persons who were vaccinated with an inactivated vaccine, which was used from 1963 through 1967, and have not been revaccinated;
- Persons born after 1957 who have only received one dose of MMR vaccine;
- Those who refused vaccination; and
- Those from parts of the world where there is low vaccination coverage or circulating measles.

Measles is caused by a highly contagious virus. Symptoms will begin one to two weeks after exposure, and include a runny nose, watery eyes, cough and a high fever. After four days, a raised, red rash starts to spread on the face, down the body and out to the arms and legs. The rash usually lasts four to seven days.

An individual with measles can spread the virus to others for four days before and four days after the rash begins. It is spread by infected droplets during sneezing or coughing, touching contaminated objects, and direct contact with infected nasal or throat secretions. Infected droplets and secretions can remain contagious on surfaces for up to two hours.

If you or your children are at risk for measles and become ill with symptoms one to two weeks after possible exposure, you should contact your health care provider immediately and tell them that you've been exposed to measles so that precautions can be taken to avoid exposing anyone else and the cause of illness can be determined.

Health care providers who treat patients with suspected cases of measles should immediately call the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH for consultation and to arrange testing.

Complications from measles can include ear infection, diarrhea and pneumonia, encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain) and even death. Measles can also cause miscarriages or premature delivery in pregnant women.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health urges all residents to be vaccinated against measles. The MMR vaccine is given to toddlers when they are 12 to 15 months of age, and a second dose is required for all Pennsylvania school children. However, individuals who have received only one dose of the vaccine, instead of the recommended two doses, may still be at risk of infection with this virus. The MMR vaccine can help prevent infection if it is given within three days of exposure. There is no risk in getting an additional dose of the MMR vaccine for individuals who may have already received it.

For people who can't receive the MMR vaccine (pregnant women, infants under six months of age, persons with compromised immune systems), or if it has been more than three days since your exposure, a dose of immune globulin can provide protection up to six days after the date of exposure.

For more information about measles, call 1-877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258) or visit [www.health.state.pa.us](http://www.health.state.pa.us).

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**Editor's Note:** The Department of Health is offering free immune globulin on the following dates and times:

**Berks County:**

- Wednesday, July 27 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Berks County State Health Center in the Reading State Office Building, on 625 Cherry St., Reading, 19602.

**Delaware County:**

- Thursday, July 28 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Delaware County State Health Center at 161 W. 5<sup>th</sup> St., Chester, 19013.

**Lehigh County:**

- Wednesday, July 27 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lehigh County State Health Center at 3730 Lehigh St., Suite 206, Whitehall, 18052

Appointments are not necessary for the clinics.

**Additional note:** Individuals possibly exposed at BB's Grocery Outlet, in Berks County, would not benefit from receiving immune globulin, as it is only effective if taken within six days of exposure to measles. Those individuals should immediately call the Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3258) to discuss their exposure and recommended next steps.

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