



February 24, 2015

Dear Principals, Superintendents, and School Administrators in Alameda County,

As you are likely aware, California is currently experiencing a large outbreak of measles. The outbreak started in December 2014 when at least 40 people who visited or worked at Disneyland theme park in Orange County were exposed and contracted measles. The outbreak has spread to many other states and to another country. As of late February, California has confirmed at least 123 measles cases and in Alameda County, 6 cases have been reported. The Alameda County Public Health Department has worked and will continue to work diligently with the people who have measles and all of the people they may have exposed to keep disease transmission to an absolute minimum.

As the Alameda County Health Officer, I urge you to ensure that all students, faculty and staff are vaccinated against measles. Although measles is very contagious, it is highly preventable through a series of two safe and highly effective doses of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine.

Two doses of measles vaccine are required for entry into all California schools, public and private (<http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-231.pdf>). The immunization rates of individual schools are public information and are posted at www.shotsforschool.org. Schools with low vaccination rates are at increased risk for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. In the event that there is a confirmed case of measles in a school or a child care, children who are missing the MMR vaccine will be excluded for a period of 7 through 21 days after exposure to the person with measles.

Alameda County Public Health Department advises each school in Alameda County to:

- Encourage vaccination by distributing the attached sample message for parents.
- Review students' immunization records and establish a list of students who have not received 2 doses of MMR.
- Advise all faculty and staff to check their own immunization records or check with their health care provider if they are not sure of their immunization status, and to obtain an MMR if indicated.
- Tell anyone with a fever and rash to NOT come to school and to call their health care provider immediately. Individuals with fever and rash should be sent home immediately if they are on campus.

These measures will decrease the risk of measles disrupting attendance at Alameda County schools, and enable us to work promptly with you to limit the impact of measles should a case occur in the Alameda County school community.

Thank you for your cooperation. Additional information about measles and the current outbreak is on our Alameda County Public Health Department website at <http://www.acphd.org/measles.aspx>.

Sincerely,

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH
Health Officer and Director
Alameda County Public Health Department



Message for Parents

The Alameda County Health Officer urges vaccination against measles due to a statewide outbreak that has reached Alameda County. If your school-aged child has not received the recommended two doses of the MMR vaccine, they are at risk of contracting measles – which can have severe consequences including hospitalization and death. If there is a measles outbreak in your school, Public Health will direct all unvaccinated children to stay home from school from 7 through 21 days after an exposure, the length of the incubation period.

Measles is highly infectious: 90 percent of those without immunity who share a space with someone with measles will contract it. People contract the virus through airborne particles that can linger in the air for up to two hours.

Vaccination is very effective: two doses of MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine provides measles immunity to 99% of those vaccinated. A single dose protects 95% of those vaccinated.

If your child develops a fever and rash, do not send him or her to school. Telephone your healthcare provider and arrange to have your child evaluated.

The immunization rates of individual schools and child care centers are public information and are posted at www.shotsforschool.org. Schools with low vaccination rates are at increased risk for outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. Please make sure your family is protected. Information about what vaccines are needed when is available on the Alameda County Public Health Department website at <http://www.acphd.org/measles.aspx>

For questions and concerns, or vaccination resources please contact Alameda County Public Health at (510) 267-3230.