



FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION
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HHSa REPORTS FOURTH MEASLES CASE RELATED TO SCHOOL OUTBREAK ***Vaccination Urged to Prevent Disease***

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSa) has confirmed an additional case of measles at San Diego Cooperative Charter School. The student is a classmate of one of the two children at the school who recently contracted measles while traveling abroad. The child had not received the measles vaccination.

This child's diagnosis brings the total number of measles cases to four, which constitutes an outbreak. An outbreak is defined by the Centers for Disease Control as two or more cases attributed to the same source. This is the County's first outbreak of measles in school-aged children since 1991.

"We are continuing surveillance and we urge parents to vaccinate their children for measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Measles is one of the most infectious diseases among humans, and is easily spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact with an infected person."

The best way to prevent measles is by getting the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. Dr. Wooten urges parents to ensure that their children receive the shot, the first dose at 12 months of age, and a second dose between ages 4-6.

"The student is at home and recovering, and HHSa staff has provided education on measles and vaccinations to parents," said Dr. Wendy Ranck-Buhr, school principal.

The parents are complying with the County's directive to keep the child at home until there is no longer a risk of spreading the disease. The County is monitoring the health of the students who are infected by measles and those who have been exposed to the disease.

Measles causes a high fever, cough, runny nose and watery eyes, followed by a rash; symptoms usually last for one to two weeks. The disease is contagious from four days before the rash appears to four days afterwards. The rash begins on the face and head then proceeds downward and outward to the hands and feet. It fades in the same order it began, from head to feet. If parents think their child has these symptoms, they should call their doctor first, disclose that their child may have the measles, and arrange a visit that will not involve contact with other patients.

Complications from measles are more common in children younger than 5 years and adults 20 years and older. Complications can include diarrhea, ear infection and pneumonia. Death can occur from severe complications and the risk is higher among younger children and adults. There is no treatment for measles. Bed rest, fluids and control of fever are recommended. Persons with complications may need treatment for their specific problem.

For more information about measles, other vaccine-preventable diseases and the shots that protect against them, please call the HHSa Immunization Branch at (619) 692-8661 or visit the website at www.sdiz.org.

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(Editor's Note: Dr. Wilma Wooten will be available for interviews until 2:00 p.m.)