



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY INVESTIGATES GROWING MEASLES OUTBREAK *Fifth Case Awaiting Confirmation*

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is waiting confirmation on a fifth case of measles related to last week's outbreak. Five additional suspect cases are being investigated.

A 10-month old infant is believed to have contracted measles at the doctor's office where the first measles patient received care. The infant was admitted to the hospital on Saturday and is expected to be released tomorrow.

"Children younger than 12 months of age are at greater risk because they have not received the measles vaccine," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "If parents think their child is exhibiting measles symptoms, they should call their doctor immediately and arrange a visit that will not involve contact with other patients," added Wooten.

The child attended the Baldwin Academy daycare in Pacific Beach and is enrolled at the Murray Callan Swim School, also in Pacific Beach.

Public Health officials today informed parents at the daycare of their children's possible exposure to measles. A total of 16 children have been identified as at-risk because they have no prior vaccination or natural immunity. The parents have been instructed to keep their children at home until February 26 to avoid spreading the disease. The County is also working with the swim school to determine the number of children that could have been exposed at that facility.

Measles is one of the most infectious diseases among humans, and is easily spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact with an infected person. This is the County's first outbreak of measles in children in 17 years.

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.

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.

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

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(Editor's Note: Dr. Wilma Wooten is available for interviews until 6:30 p.m.)

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