



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Measles Alert for Washington County

For Immediate Release: June 21, 2011

Media Contact: Communication Office
Vermont Department of Health
802-863-7281

BURLINGTON – The Vermont Department of Health has just advised health care providers statewide of a suspected case of measles identified in a young child who lives in Washington County.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that can be spread from person to person through the air. Although measles has not been confirmed in this case, the Health Department is working to alert anyone who may have been exposed.

IF you (or a family member) were at:

- McDonald's Restaurant on the Barre-Montpelier Road on Thursday, June 16 between 5:30 and 9:00 p.m. - OR -
- East Barre Fire Department barbeque on Sunday, June 19.

AND you were born after 1957, have not already had measles, and are not fully vaccinated against measles–

CALL your health care provider as soon as possible – or call the Health Department at 802-863-7240 until 8:00 p.m. tonight (June 21) or after 8:00 a.m. tomorrow (June 22).

MMR vaccine (for measles, mumps and rubella) may provide protection against disease if given within 72 hours of the last exposure. Immune globulin, given within six days of exposure, is recommended for infants younger than 12 months of age, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems.

Typical symptoms of measles are fever, cough and a rash. At first, measles looks and feels like a cold. Cough, high fever, runny nose and red, watery eyes are common. A few days later, a red, blotchy rash starts on the face and then spreads to the rest of the body. For some people, measles can cause serious complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis and rarely, brain damage or death.

Anyone with measles can spread the disease to people who are not vaccinated starting four days before the rash begins until four days after it appears.

While uncommon in the U.S., this year there has been a resurgence of measles cases in North America, including Quebec, New York and Massachusetts, and across Europe. Although measles vaccination rates for young children in Vermont are reported to be 92 percent, that may not be high enough to prevent measles from spreading.

Children in Vermont are required to have two doses of measles vaccine before enrolling in Kindergarten. Children 15 months and older who attend licensed childcare or preschool in Vermont are required to have one dose of the measles vaccine. Students attending Vermont post-secondary schools are required to have two doses of measles vaccine or laboratory results proving they are immune. However, Vermont is one of 16 states where parents who claim a philosophical exemption may enroll children in child care or school without being immunized.

Anyone born before 1957 is likely to have had measles in the past, and is considered to be immune to measles.

For more information, go to www.healthvermont.gov.

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