



The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)
MEASLES TALKING POINTS

1. Measles (rubeola) is a notifiable disease in Alabama. The IMM Division regularly investigates reports of suspected measles. As of April 25, 2019, there have been no reported cases of measles in Alabama for 2019.
2. ADPH was notified on April 23, 2019 that a person from East Tennessee with measles disease traveled through Alabama on April 11, 2019 and stopped at D and J Truck Stop in Livingston and Chick fil A in Fort Payne. (See news release from 4/24/2019 for additional information.)
3. Due to the measles case from East Tennessee having traveled in Alabama, the ADPH is working to inform patrons of the two establishments above of any potential exposure. Patrons exposed need to check their vaccine records, monitor themselves for any symptoms of measles, and obtain MMR vaccine if never vaccinated.
4. In order to have no measles cases in Alabama, we must maintain high rates of MMR vaccination. MMR, given within 72 hours of exposure to a case of measles, can prevent a secondary case. While the 72 hour time frame has passed for the exposure to the East Tennessee case, unvaccinated persons can still benefit from obtaining vaccine to reduce future risk of measles disease.
5. ADPH urges that all persons know their measles vaccine status and, if never vaccinated, are strongly encouraged to obtain an MMR from their physician, healthcare provider, or pharmacy.
6. ADPH vaccine efforts primarily focus on children under nineteen years of age. Free MMR vaccine is only available for children participating in the Vaccine for Children (VFC) Program and for persons who may qualify based upon local health department fee schedules.
7. ADPH has a very limited supply of MMR for adults and urges those with insurance and other coverage such as Medicaid to be vaccinated at their pharmacy or provider.
8. As of April 25, 2019, at least 695 cases of measles have been confirmed in 22 states. These numbers will continue to increase. These outbreaks are occurring primarily in unvaccinated persons and are the result of the travel of unvaccinated persons to countries with low vaccination rates and ongoing outbreaks.
9. Measles is due to a failure to vaccinate. MMR vaccine is the only vaccine to protect against measles. Two doses of MMR vaccine, given at appropriate age and intervals, are over 97% effective in preventing measles.



10. There are a few contraindications to MMR vaccine. This information is available on the CDC website, simply type “CDC MMR Contraindications” into your browser and this information should pop up. People with a contraindication should not receive MMR vaccine, including those who are pregnant, had a severe allergic reaction after receiving a dose of MMR or a component of the vaccine including gelatin or neomycin, and has known severe immunodeficiency or a family history of severe immunodeficiency. In addition to contraindications, there are precautions listed by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). NOTE: If additional information is requested on contraindications and precautions, please refer to the pdf “Vaccine Contraindications”.
11. The concern voiced by some that the MMR vaccine causes autism and other general concerns have been researched. Despite numerous studies performed over the last two decades finding that the MMR and other vaccines do not cause autism, there continues to be vaccine hesitancy and vaccine refusals. Several advocacy groups including Autism Speaks urges parents and caregivers to vaccinate children. There are factors that have been found to increase the risk of autism including, but not limited to, increased parental age, some pregnancy and birth complications such as extreme prematurity and low birth weight.
12. Measles is a very contagious viral illness spread from secretions from the nose and throat. Because the virus is spread by respiratory droplets, the virus can live suspended in the air or on surfaces for at least two hours.
13. About 95% or more of unvaccinated people exposed to a single case of measles will contract the disease. For every single case, 12-18 additional cases can be expected. The complication rate from measles is about 20-30 %, especially in infants, children less than five years of age, and persons 20 years and older. Complications can range from ear infections and pneumonia to deadly encephalitis. For every 1000 people with measles, one to two people will die.
14. It is important to know the signs and symptoms of measles that occur before the rash. Patients develop fever, sometimes as high as 105 degrees, followed by cough, runny nose, and red eyes (conjunctivitis). Anywhere from 1-7 days after these symptoms begin, the rash develops. The rash starts on the face and spreads across the body. Patients may also have small white spots on the inside of the mouth on the cheek which may occur from 2 days before and up to 2 days after the rash.
15. From the time that a person is exposed to measles, it can take 7-21 days for signs and symptoms to occur with an average of 10-14 days. People are contagious from four days before the rash develops until four days after.