



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Health Investigates Measles Case

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department confirmed today that an adult resident of the county has the measles virus. The Department investigates all cases of measles in the county and identifies potential contacts to try to prevent additional spread of measles.

The unvaccinated adult had contact with international travelers over the holidays, showed symptoms of measles starting January 3rd and visited Twin Cities Community Hospital emergency department on January 8th and 9th. The hospital is in the process of verifying that exposed staff members have been fully vaccinated against the measles virus. Exposed hospital patients and visitors are being contacted. The confirmed measles patient is cooperating with the Department's investigation to determine if any additional individuals were exposed to the highly contagious virus.

"Measles is a serious disease that can be easily prevented," said County of San Luis Obispo Deputy Health Officer Dr. Christy Mulkerin. "Vaccination is the best way to protect against measles. Two doses of the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine are approximately 97 percent effective at preventing disease in exposed persons."

This case in San Luis Obispo County follows a recent outbreak of measles in Los Angeles County and one case in neighboring Santa Barbara County. It is currently not known if the cases are related.

Measles is spread through the air from person to person through coughing or sneezing. The symptoms of measles generally appear about seven to 14 days after a person is infected. Measles typically begins with high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis). Two or three days after symptoms begin, tiny white spots ([*Koplik spots*](#)) may appear inside the mouth. Then [*a rash of tiny, red spots*](#) breaks out. It starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body. People with measles are usually contagious for about nine days, including the four days before their rash starts, the day of rash onset, and ending four days after.

Measles can be serious, especially for young children. It can lead to pneumonia, encephalitis (swelling of the brain), and death. People in the United States still get measles, but it is not very common because most people in this country are protected against measles through vaccination. However, measles is still common in other parts of the world, including many countries in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. Every year, unvaccinated people get measles while they are abroad and bring the disease into the United States and spread it to others.

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County of San Luis Obispo Health Agency

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Measles can spread quickly in communities where people are not vaccinated, which is why it is so important to be up to date on vaccinations, including before traveling abroad. People who have had measles in the past or who have been vaccinated against measles per Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations are considered immune. Those who are unsure of their vaccination status should check with their doctor to determine if they need to receive the vaccine. If you are ill, and are concerned you may have measles, you should contact your doctor by phone first before going to their office so measures can be taken to prevent possible spread to others.

For more information about measles, please visit www.cdc.gov/measles.

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