



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
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Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HEALTH DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATING MEASLES OUTBREAK IN NORTHERN MANHATTAN AND THE BRONX

Department urges all New Yorkers to make sure they are vaccinated against measles

Infants should be vaccinated at 12 months of age

March 7, 2014 – The Health Department announced today that it has identified 16 cases of measles in northern Manhattan and the Bronx. Seven adult cases and 9 pediatric cases have been identified to date. New Yorkers are urged to make sure all household members, including young children, are vaccinated. To date, there have been four hospitalizations as a result of this outbreak.

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection characterized by a generalized rash and high fever, accompanied by cough, red eyes, and runny nose, lasting five to six days. The illness typically begins with a rash on the face and then moves down the body, and may include the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. People who contract the measles virus can spread the infection for four days before developing a rash, and for four days after the rash sets in. Measles can spread easily through the air to unprotected individuals. If you suspect you have measles, call and explain your symptoms to your doctor or medical provider **BEFORE** leaving to avoid exposing others to the measles virus.



The Health Department is working with New York City hospitals to prevent additional exposure to the virus in emergency departments. The Health Department is also asking pediatric-care facilities in Manhattan and the Bronx to identify and vaccinate children who have not received the MMR vaccine and to give the second dose of MMR vaccine to children at the next medical visit. Adults who are unsure of their vaccination history can be revaccinated or obtain a blood test to see if they are immune. Several adults who are included in this outbreak thought they had been vaccinated in the past, but lacked documentation.

As many as one in three people with measles develop complications. These complications from measles can be very serious and include pneumonia, miscarriage, brain inflammation, hospitalization and even death. Infants under one year of age, people who have a weakened immune system and non-immune pregnant women are at highest risk of severe illness and complications.

Protect Yourself and Your Family from Measles:

- Babies should receive the first measles vaccine at 12 months of age. Children older than 12 months of age who have not yet received a measles vaccine (given as MMR or Measles-Mumps-Rubella) should be vaccinated as soon as possible. Several children who have developed measles were not vaccinated at 12 months of age.
- Vaccinating older children is the best way to protect children who are too young to receive the shot.
- Two doses of measles vaccine are required for full protection. Children usually get the second measles shot at 4 to 6 years of age before going to school.
- Older children and adults who have not received two measles shots may be at risk of infection.
- Vaccinations are very safe. The benefits far outweigh any risks. Side effects are usually mild, such as soreness where the shot was given.
- Be sure that you and your family are fully vaccinated prior to international travel. Measles is found in many parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.
- Visit your doctor or call 311 to find out where to get vaccinated.

For more information on [measles](#), visit [nyc.gov](#).

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