MAINE PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT NETWORK SYSTEM

Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC)
(Formerly Bureau of Health)
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*****ADVISORY – Important Information*****

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TO: Epidemiologists, HETL, Local Public Health Liaisons, City and County Health Departments – ALL, Healthcare – ALL, Lab Facilities, County EMA Directors, MMA Central Office, Public Health – Required, Public Health Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, RRCs

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SUBJECT: **Measles Alert**

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Measles Alert - June 2011

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus. United States is experiencing a surge of measles, and cases have been diagnosed as close as Massachusetts. The majority of measles cases reported in the United States in 2011 have been associated with importation, primarily from Europe and South-East Asia. Quebec has identified 208 new cases of measles since May 1, 2011. Maine clinicians are asked to increase surveillance for rash illness suggestive of measles to identify early potential cases and prevent the spread of disease in Maine

Measles symptoms include fever, runny nose, cough, loss of appetite, pink eye and a rash. The rash usually lasts 5 – 6 days. It begins at the hairline, moving to the face and upper neck, and proceeding down the body. The measles rash appear typically appears 2-3 days after fever onset. Measles patients are infectious for 4 days prior to 4 days after the onset of rash. Person-to person transmission occurs by infectious droplets. All suspect patients should be placed in a separate waiting area or a private room with negative pressure.

Diagnosis

Maine CDC requests that clinicians report suspect case of measles to **1-800-821-5821**. Maine CDC recommends collecting clinical specimens and advising suspect patients to remain at home until test results are known to prevent exposing others to the measles virus. Measles testing is available at Maine's Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/etl/micro/measles_lsis.pdf . Laboratory tests for acute measles infection include viral culture, serology and PCR. Acceptable specimens include throat swabs, NP swabs, and blood.

Control Measures

Maine CDC will work with patients and clinicians to identify exposed contacts and to assess individuals for evidence of immunity. Measles vaccine may prevent disease if given within 72 hours of exposure.

Vaccinate

- **Children**. All children should receive two doses of MMR. The first dose should be given at 12-15 months of age and the second at 4-6 years of age. Children who are 6-11 months of age who will be traveling internationally should receive 1 dose of MMR vaccine. Every effort should be made to identify and vaccinate children who are not up-to date.
- **Adults**. All adults should have acceptable proof of immunity to measles. For adults with no evidence of immunity to measles, 1 dose of MMR vaccine is recommended, unless the adult is in a high risk group (e.g., international travelers, health care workers, and college students), in which case 2 doses of MMR vaccine are recommended. Women are advised to not receive any live virus vaccine during pregnancy, including MMR.

Please report any suspect cases of measles to Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821