

Minimizing measles risk in Minnesota

In 2018, 98 countries experienced an increase in reported measles cases, including the U.S. So far, 2019 has also been a big year for measles. Measles outbreaks are occurring in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. In the U.S. from Jan. 1 to March 14, 2019, 268 cases of measles have been confirmed in 15 states. No measles cases have been confirmed in Minnesota so far this year; however, it is likely only a matter of time given the large number of cases occurring across the country and globe.

Health care providers can take action to minimize the risk of measles in Minnesota:

- **Vaccinate** patients who are not up to date on measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine.
 - Use MIIC (www.health.state.mn.us/miic) to check vaccination status of patients at every visit.
 - Children get MMR at age 1 and at 4-6 years. Older children through age 18 years should have documentation of 2 MMR doses. If they don't, they should receive 2 doses, 4 weeks apart.
 - Adults should have documentation of 1 MMR. If they don't, vaccinate them. Those entering college, traveling, or work as a health care personnel should have documentation of 2 doses or a lab test that shows immunity. If they don't, they should receive 2 doses, 4 weeks apart.
 - Before international travel, infants age 6-11 months should get 1 dose of MMR vaccine.
- **Talk** to patients about the importance of MMR vaccine.
 - When parents have questions, it does not always mean they won't accept vaccines. Sometimes, they simply want your answers to their questions.
 - Use CDC's Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/conversations/index.html) for tips when talking to parents.
- **Ask** patients with fever and rash illness about any recent travel (domestic and international).
 - Isolate suspected measles cases and promptly report to MDH at 1-877-676-5414 or 651-201-5414.
 - Collect specimens for PCR by following instructions on Lab Testing for Measles at the MDH Public Health Laboratory (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/hcp/labtesting.html).
 - Advise the patient to stay at home with no visitors until PCR results are back.
- **Share** information about measles with the public.
 - Our Think Measles (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/thinkmeasles/index.html) poster is available in multiple languages.
 - Share the recent CDC Features story about measles (www.cdc.gov/features/measles/) on social media or your website.
 - CDC's Educational Resources for Parents and Childcare Providers (www.cdc.gov/measles/resources/parents-caregivers.html) has printable fact sheets, posters, and infographics.

Once again, a study shows no link between MMR and autism

Denmark researcher Anders Hviid and associates conducted a large study of over 600,000 children. The study was large enough to look at children vaccinated with MMR and not vaccinated with MMR, including among children with possible risk factors for autism. The researchers concluded that the risk for autism was no different in children who got the MMR vaccine than in children who did not, even when some children might have risk factors for autism, such as a sibling with autism or an older father. The study was published in March in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Get ready for National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW)

This year, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of NIIW (April 27-May 4). NIIW is an important time to celebrate the success of immunizations and the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases.

We need your help to raise awareness about the importance of immunizations in every corner of the state. Start thinking about what your organization can do during NIIW. (Tip: See next article for an easy thing you can do!)

Find campaign resources on our National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/hcp/niiw.html) website. CDC also has an NIIW Digital Media Toolkit (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/web-etools/digital-toolkit.html) with resources and events happening during the week that you can participate in.

New animated video series for parents

In a new CDC animated video series, viewers follow baby Jack and his parents as they get answers to common questions about vaccines and learn more about the importance of vaccinating on schedule. The first video describes how vaccines fight germs and provide long-lasting protection against 14 serious diseases. The second video shows how a baby's immune system responds to vaccines. The third video shows what to expect after vaccination. Watch the videos on CDC's Infant and Childhood Resources page (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/resources/childhood.html#videos). Share them on social media (especially during NIIW!) to help parents understand how vaccines work.

MDH on social media

Share immunization and other health information with people in your community by connecting with MDH on:

- Facebook (www.facebook.com/mnhealth)
- Twitter (www.twitter.com/mnhealth)
- Instagram (www.instagram.com/mnhealth/)
- LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/company/mnhealth)
- YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/MNDeptofHealth)