



Heighten Awareness for Measles

March 12, 2024

The Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) advises healthcare providers to be alert for symptoms of measles and report any suspect or confirmed cases to WCHD. In the past week, the Chicago Department of Public Health has reported four (4) cases of measles in Chicago, Illinois. While there have been no reported cases in Winnebago County to date, local healthcare providers should consider measles in the differential diagnosis in patients with symptoms consistent with the infection or who report exposure to measles.

The CDC has already confirmed [45 cases of measles in the U.S. this year](#), compared to 58 cases for all of 2023. Illinois has had nine (9) cases of measles in the last six months. This is reflective of a [rise in global measles](#) cases.

Ensure that front desk and scheduling staff is aware and takes the necessary steps to prevent exposures in waiting areas.

If you suspect measles:

- **Immediately place the patient in airborne precautions.**
- Test for measles using a serum IgM test and/or a naso-pharyngeal PCR test
- Provide post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to unimmunized individuals exposed to measles
 - MMR vaccine (within 72 hours of exposure) OR
 - Immunoglobulin (IG) (within 6 days of exposure)
- **Report the suspected case of measles immediately to the Winnebago County Health Department at 815-720-4050. DO NOT WAIT for lab results.**

Measles typically begins with:

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes

Followed 3 to 5 days later by a characteristic rash of flat red spots starting at the head and moving distally

The **symptoms** of measles generally appear 7 to 14 days after a person is exposed, but can appear for up to 21 days. Individuals are considered contagious from 4 days before to 4 days after the rash appears.

Additional Resources:

- CDC: [Measles](#)
- CDC: [Measles Vaccination Information](#)
- IDPH: [Measles Testing Instructions](#)