

**ANDREW J SPANO**  
County Executive

**Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Commissioner, Department of Health

# **ATTENTION**

## **Public Health**

### **Update**

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**The Westchester County Department of Health provides public health updates to members of the medical community on important issues affecting public health in Westchester**

July 1, 2002

#### **MEASLES IN INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS AND INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS IN NEW YORK CITY**

- 1. Please review vaccination status of all individuals, but particularly children who travel internationally or are likely to be exposed to international travelers.**
  - **Any child  $\geq 12$  months of age in the above categories should receive at least one dose of a measles-containing vaccine.**
  - **Consider administering monovalent measles vaccine to children 6-11 months of age in the above categories.**
  - **Any non-pregnant adult without a history of measles or vaccination against measles should receive 2 doses of measles-containing vaccine.**
- 2. Consider measles in the differential diagnosis of individuals presenting with fever, rash illness, and a history of international travel or exposure to international travelers.**
- 3. Place any patients with suspected measles in respiratory isolation; such patients should be brought immediately into an appropriate examination room and NOT allowed in waiting rooms or other patient contact areas.**
- 4. Notify the Westchester County Department of Health immediately of any suspected cases of measles 24 hours per day/ 7 days per week at (914) 813-5000.**

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO INTERNAL MEDICINE, FAMILY PRACTICE, PRIMARY CARE, PEDIATRIC, EMERGENCY ROOM, INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND AMBULATORY CARE STAFF

Dear Pediatricians, Family Practitioners, Infection Control Practitioners, Infectious Disease Physicians, Emergency Department Directors, Medical Directors, and Laboratory Directors:

Since April 9, 2002, the New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) has identified five cases of laboratory-confirmed measles in residents of Queens and Brooklyn. Four of the cases were in children <12 months of age who would not yet be vaccinated, as current recommendations are to vaccinate with measles/mumps/rubella at 12-15 months of age. Two of the cases had a history of international travel and are believed to have acquired their infections abroad; the remaining three cases were epidemiologically linked or resulted from exposure to cases which were acquired abroad.

While no cases have been reported in Westchester County, these cases serve as a reminder that the risk of imported measles is real and that susceptible populations can be infected. Of concern are children less than 12 months of age who would not be vaccinated. These children, if exposed, may require treatment with immune globulin. Any non-pregnant adult who has not had measles or been previously vaccinated should receive 2 doses of a measles containing vaccine. As the outbreaks in New York City demonstrate, because of international travel, the typical seasonal presentation of measles (historically during the winter months) may no longer apply. As the summer approaches, more Westchester County residents may undertake international travel, including travel to locations endemic for measles. Because vaccination coverage varies from country to country, it is important to check the vaccination status of individuals who are foreign-born or travel internationally.

Parents who travel internationally with their children to countries that are endemic for measles should be sure that their children over 12 months of age have received one dose of a measles-containing vaccine. If eligible, these children should also receive their second dose of a measles-containing vaccine (over 15 months of age and >28 days since the first dose). For those infants between 6 and 11 months of age, consideration should be given to vaccinating them with a measles-containing vaccine (preferably as monovalent measles vaccine); then they should receive MMR vaccine at 12 to 15 months of age (at least 4 weeks after the initial measles investigation) and again at 4 to 6 years of age.

It is critical to maintain a high index of suspicion for measles in persons presenting with fever and rash illness and a history of international travel, visits to airports and areas of high tourism, and/or encounters with persons who have traveled to areas endemic for measles.

**TO REPORT A SUSPECT CASE OF MEASLES AND ARRANGE FOR TESTING,  
CALL THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AT:**

**(914) 813-5159  
(914) 813-5000**

**Mon-Fri 8:30 AM- 4:30 PM  
24 hours/day; 7 days/week**

As always, your cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely,  
*William Terry*  
William Terry, MPH  
Epidemiologist, Communicable Diseases

*Ada J. Huang*  
Ada J. Huang, MD  
Deputy Commissioner, Disease Control

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