Preparing for and Responding to Measles in Your Childcare Center

Measles can spread quickly in a childcare setting and can cause serious illness. Unvaccinated children and staff are at risk for serious disease, especially children 5 years of age and younger, pregnant people, and people with weakened immune systems. The most important step you can take is to ensure children and staff are vaccinated with the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. The MMR vaccine is safe and effective at preventing measles disease.

How to prepare

- Ensure children are vaccinated with the MMR vaccine or have a legal exemption on file. Childcares in Minnesota can now have a policy to not accept non-medical exemptions.
- Encourage staff to confirm they have received the MMR vaccine or have immunity to measles. If they know they aren't immune to measles encourage them to receive the MMR vaccine.
- Save immunization and exemption records for all children and make sure these records are current and easy to look up.
  - Using MIIC to Complete the Childcare Immunization Report (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/provider/miicccaisr.pdf) is a tool that can assist you when gathering immunization records.
- Inform families of unvaccinated children and unvaccinated staff that they may need to stay home for up to 21 days each time they are near someone who has measles.
- Know the signs and symptoms of measles.
  - Measles (Rubeola) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/measlesfacts.html)

Steps to take if there has been a person with measles at your childcare center

Childcare providers are required to let the Minnesota Department of Health know right away if someone with measles has been at their childcare.

1. Contact MDH if someone with measles may have been at your childcare by calling **651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414**.
2. Follow **all** instructions given to you by MDH or Local Public Health (LPH) staff.
3. Review the attendance records for all children that attended your center during the time the person with measles may have been at your center and track the:
   - Child's/staff first and last name
   - Parents' first and last names (for children only)
   - Address
   - Phone number
   - Date of birth
   - Days the child normally attends your center
   - Classroom of the child
   - MMR vaccination date (if applicable

4. If MDH has confirmed the person did have measles and they were sick while at your center, you may need to share the information gathered during step 3 with MDH or LPH.
5. Let MDH know if anyone else who has been in your childcare becomes sick with measles.
6. Enforce the public health recommendations for people that MDH has determined may have been near a person with measles and could potentially spread measles to other people.

Depending on the situation, people who have not been vaccinated with any doses of MMR and have been near someone with measles may be asked to remain home for up to 3 weeks.

Why MDH can ask for this information

Because measles spreads easily and rapidly, and can result in severe disease, it is a serious health threat and is an immediately reportable disease in Minnesota. MDH investigates all suspected cases of measles, including identifying any contacts of a measles case that are at risk of developing measles and determining necessary control measures. This disease investigation authority is found in Minnesota Rule 4605.7500 (www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4605.7500/).

Schools and childcare settings are required to report under the communicable disease reporting rules found in Chapter 4605 of the Minnesota Rules.

- The law requires reporting of both cases and suspected cases, and anyone who had contact with a person who had measles would be a suspect case and need to be followed by MDH.
- Measles is specifically listed as an immediately reportable disease under Minn. R. 4605.7040 (www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4605.7040/).

It is important that public health gets information as soon as possible so that it can notify families of the exposure, let families know what they should do if they were not vaccinated at the time of exposure, and let families know how they can contact MDH and seek care if they develop symptoms. If public health can't get the above information in a timely way, public health may consider other options to obtain the necessary information.

Additional resources

- MIIC and Provider Organizations (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/provider/index.html)
- Childcare Providers Immunization Reporting (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/ed/childcare.html)
- Measles Information (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/measles/basics.html)
- Chapter 4605 Communicable Disease Reporting (www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4605/)

Minnesota Department of Health
PO Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-203-5503
www.health.state.mn.us/immunize

09/05/2024

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.