



PUBLIC HEALTH

Employee Health and Wellness Center

William Clay Brown, MD

Local Health Authority

Mary-Beth Bess, RN, FNP-BC

Health Services Director

February 6, 2019

Public Health Information Press Release - Measles

Situational Update: Five measles cases have been reported in three different counties within the Department of State Health Services Region 6/5 South (Southeast Texas). **No Measles cases have been reported in Chambers County.** Vaccination remains the most effective method for preventing measles.

What is Measles?

Measles is an infection that can cause a rash, fever, and cough. It is caused by infection with the measles virus. This virus spreads very easily from person to person.

There is a vaccine (that comes in a shot) that keeps people from getting measles. It is called the MMR vaccine. It protects against 3 different infections: measles, mumps, and rubella. People need 2 doses of the MMR vaccine to protect against measles.

People who are at risk for measles include:

- Children too young to get a measles shot
- People who have never had a measles shot
- People who did not get a second measles shot
- People who got a shot that did not work well

What are the Symptoms of Measles?

The first symptoms can include:

- Fever – Up to 105°F (40°C)
- Feeling sick, like with a cold
- Loss of appetite
- Spots in the mouth – These can look like grains of salt.

After the first symptoms, many people have:

- Red, runny eyes. The eyes might also be extra sensitive to bright light.
- Sneezing and coughing
- A red rash that starts on the face and spreads to the body. The spots in the rash can form red patches.
- A sore throat

Most people start feeling better about 2 days after the rash starts. After 3 or 4 days, the rash starts to turn brown and go away. The skin might peel or flake off, like after a sunburn. Many people have a cough for 1 or 2 weeks after the rash goes away.

Some people who get measles have other symptoms, such as a headache, chest pain, or breathing problems.



PUBLIC HEALTH

Employee Health and Wellness Center

William Clay Brown, MD

Local Health Authority

Mary-Beth Bess, RN, FNP-BC

Health Services Director

How are the Measles Spread?

If you have not had measles or the MMR vaccine, you can catch measles from an infected person. This can happen if you are around an infected person or go somewhere an infected person has been.

A person with measles can start spreading it about 5 days before he or she gets a rash. It can spread for about 4 days after the rash is gone.

Should I call if I think my Child or I have the Measles?

Yes. If you or your child has a fever and rash, call your Health Care Provider. He or she can ask questions and tell you what to do next. Don't go without calling first. Measles spreads easily, so you could give it to other people at the doctor's office.

What if my Child or I was around Someone with Measles?

If you or your child has not had the MMR vaccine, call your Health Care Provider. It might still be possible to avoid getting sick. If you get it soon enough, the vaccine can stop measles or make it less serious. People who cannot get the vaccine can take a medicine that can help keep them from getting sick.

Is there a Test for Measles?

Yes. Your Health Care Provider can do blood tests to check for measles. But these tests might not be needed. They can often tell if a person has measles by doing an exam and learning about the symptoms.

What is the Treatment for Measles?

For most people, there is no specific treatment. If you or your child have it, you can:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Take acetaminophen (sample brand name: Tylenol) to help with fever and aches.

Do not give aspirin or medicines that contain aspirin to children younger than 18. In children, aspirin can cause a serious problem called Reye syndrome. If measles causes other health problems, such as ear infections, doctors can usually treat them. But a few health problems from measles can be life-threatening.

Is there a Vaccine for Measles?

Yes. The MMR vaccine prevents infection. All children should get the MMR vaccine when they are 12 to 15 months old. Then they need a second shot when they are 4 to 6 years old. A child should have the second shot before he or she starts school. Some babies and children need to get the vaccine earlier than usual, if they:

- Live in an area where there is a measles outbreak
- Need to travel to an area where there is a measles outbreak
- Need to travel outside of the United States



PUBLIC HEALTH

Employee Health and Wellness Center

William Clay Brown, MD

Local Health Authority

Mary-Beth Bess, RN, FNP-BC

Health Services Director

Some older children and adults also need the MMR vaccine, such as:

- Hospital or health care workers
- Students who don't have written proof of 2 shots
- People traveling outside the United States who don't have written proof of 1 shot

Some people in the US got a vaccine that did not work well. If you got a measles shot before 1968, talk to your Health Care Provider.

Some people should wait or get tested before getting the MMR vaccine. This includes people with HIV/AIDS or cancer and people taking certain medicines.

The MMR vaccine has a small amount of gelatin and an antibiotic. If you or your child have any allergies, or had a bad reaction to a vaccine, tell your Health Care Provider.

What if I want to get Pregnant?

If you want to get pregnant, be sure your MMR vaccine is up-to-date. This means knowing if you got it in the past. If you are not sure, your Health Care Provider can do a blood test to check.

Getting measles when you are pregnant could cause a miscarriage. This is when a pregnancy ends before a woman has been pregnant for 20 weeks. Or the baby could be born too early. Babies who are born early can have serious life-long health problems.

The MMR vaccine must be given before pregnancy. After you get it, wait at least 4 weeks before trying to get pregnant

If you have further questions please contact Chambers County Health Department or your Healthcare Provider.

102 Airport Rd, Suite 200, Anahuac, Texas 77514 | 409-267-2731 phone | 409-267-4276 fax

facebook – cctxhealthdept
twitter – cctxhealthdept
instagram – cctxhealthdept
pinterest - cctxhealthdept

www.co.chambers.tx.us