

March 25, 2014

Important Information on Measles for Manitoba Parents/Guardians

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Two confirmed cases of measles have been identified in Manitoba. There have also been recent outbreaks of measles in other parts of Canada, including a current outbreak in British Columbia where there are over 200 cases.

Measles is an extremely contagious illness, spread easily through the air. The best way to protect your child (aged one to seventeen years of age) from measles is to make sure that your child is up to date with his/her measles immunizations, which are provided free-of-charge by your immunization provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or local public health unit).

If your child is not up to date with his/her measles immunizations and is exposed to a case of measles in his/her school or child care facility, you may be asked by public health or your child's school or child care facility to keep your child home for up to three weeks to prevent infection and ensure his/her safety as well the safety of his/her peers. You do not have to keep your child home at this time **unless** they are showing symptoms of measles, as described below.

Signs and symptoms of measles infection include:

- Fever 38.3C or higher
- Cough, runny nose or red eyes
- Red blotchy rash appearing 3-7 days after the fever starts, beginning on the face and spreading down the body

If you or your child has all of the symptoms above, please keep your child home from his/her school or child care facility. Contacting Health Links-Info Santé or your primary health care provider can help you in determining whether you or your child should receive further assessment and if that is needed, what accommodations can be put in place **PRIOR** to your visit to minimize contact with other patients. Many viral infections can have similar signs and symptoms, and measles remains extremely rare in Manitoba.

Call Health Links-Info Santé in Winnipeg at 204-788-8200; toll-free elsewhere in Manitoba at 1-888-315-9257 for more information.

Sincerely,



Tim Hilderman, MD FRCPC
Medical Director, Manitoba Immunization Program