

Measles Outbreak: Know the Facts

There have been 6 reported cases of measles reported in Santa Clara County of unvaccinated people between 3/5/18 and 4/3/18

Measles is an acute viral respiratory illness. It is characterized by a fever (as high as 105°F) and malaise, cough, coryza (runny nose), and conjunctivitis (red eyes)-the three “C”s -, and a rash. The rash usually appears about 14 days after a person is exposed. The rash spreads from the head to the trunk to the lower extremities. Patients are considered to be contagious from 4 days before to 4 days after the rash appears.

People at High Risk for Complications

Infants and children aged <5 years

Adults aged >20 years

Pregnant women

People with compromised immune systems, such as from leukemia and HIV infection

Measles is one of the most contagious of all infectious diseases; approximately 9 out of 10 susceptible persons with close contact to a measles patient will develop measles. The virus is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Measles virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area.

Measles can be prevented with measles-containing vaccine, which is primarily administered as the combination measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. The combination measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (MMRV) vaccine can be used for children aged 12 months through 12 years for protection against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella. Single-antigen measles vaccine is not available.

One dose of MMR vaccine is approximately 93% effective at preventing measles; two doses are approximately 97% effective.