



DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the current measles outbreak in California, to encourage that all unvaccinated children receive the measles vaccine as soon as possible, and to outline the expectations should there be a case of measles in a Marin school.

There have been 68 confirmed cases of measles in California in 2015, many of which have been linked to Disneyland or Disney California Adventure Park in Anaheim. Marin County currently has no reported cases. Several other Bay Area counties, however, have reported cases in this outbreak.

Measles is a very contagious airborne illness and is highly preventable through vaccination. The virus is spread by sharing the same area with an infected person, especially if that person coughs or sneezes. Individuals are usually contagious starting 4 days before they develop symptoms, and may unknowingly make others ill.

Measles usually starts with a high fever, runny nose, red and irritated eyes, and a rash. The rash is red and bumpy, starts on the face and moves down the rest of the body. Some people may suffer complications such as pneumonia or swelling of the brain and may require hospitalization.

The best way to prevent measles is to receive the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine. Children routinely get their first dose of the MMR vaccine at 12-15 months of age, and the second dose before beginning kindergarten. This combination is more than 99% effective in preventing measles.

If your child is unvaccinated or cannot provide laboratory confirmation of immunity and there is a case in their school, they will be excluded from attending school for 21 days to protect themselves and to limit further spread of disease.

It takes two weeks to develop immunity after receiving a measles vaccine. Unvaccinated or under vaccinated children should be vaccinated as soon as possible so they will have protection and to prevent future absences from school.

As Public Health Officer, I would like to thank you for doing your part to keep our Marin families healthy.

Sincerely,

Matt Willis, MD, MPH  
Marin County Public Health Officer