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Notice to School Districts

There has been a recent outbreak of measles in the school setting in Vancouver, BC, as well as reports of measles in Washington State affecting school-age children. This has increased interest in measles and vaccination among parents and school staff on Vancouver Island. Please find below some information to share with your school staff and families.

Any case of measles diagnosed by a physician or in hospital should be reported immediately to Island Health Communicable Disease. Island Health Communicable Disease will investigate and determine if a case requires further public health follow up, including contacting a case’s school or workplace if appropriate. If your school is notified about a measles case by a parent or staff, please contact Island Health Communicable Disease to verify the information before notifying other students or staff. If a student or staff becomes unwell at school, particularly if they develop fever and a red rash, they should be sent home as soon as possible and should seek medical care if measles is considered possible. If an ill child or adult with fever and a rash goes to hospital/clinic, they should ask for a mask before entering the facility.

At this time, we encourage all families and school staff to review their immunization records and make sure that they have received two doses of MMR vaccine if born in 1970 or later. Adults who are unsure of their vaccination history are also eligible for MMR vaccine. Vaccination is available through community physicians, pharmacists and public health units (primarily for children). Please call ahead to your healthcare provider to ensure that MMR vaccine is available.

When there is a confirmed case of measles in the school setting, where exposure at the school was likely, the following measures usually occur:

- Cases are excluded from school until they are no longer infectious (usually 4 days to a week)
- People at the school who may have been exposed will be informed and asked to provide proof of protection against measles (e.g. a documented history of MMR immunization for people born in 1970 or later). People born before 1970 are considered protected because of past exposure/disease.
- Students and staff who do not have proof of protection will be *excluded* from school for up to three weeks after a likely exposure to measles. This is to prevent further exposure in the school setting, given that measles is highly contagious and people can transmit the disease even before symptoms occur.
- Immunization with MMR will be offered to students who have not had 2 doses, to boost their protection and to staff as needed base on age.

Communicable Disease Office	Address	Phone Number
South Island CD Office	1947 Cook St Victoria	1.866.665.6626
Central Island CD Office	#8 – 1599 Dufferin Crescent Nanaimo	1.866770.7798
North Island CD Office	355 11 th Street Courtenay	1.877.887.8835

Information for Students and Families

With the outbreak of measles in Vancouver, BC, families may be wondering what steps they can take to protect themselves from measles. Vaccination is the best method of protection. All school-age children and adults born in 1970 or later should have 2 doses of MMR vaccine for full protection. Most people born before 1970 are immune to measles because of past exposure or disease. Please take some time to check your vaccination records to see if you or your children need additional vaccination. Vaccination is available from physicians, pharmacists (for adults and children over 5 years), and public health units (for children). Call ahead to your healthcare provider to ensure that MMR is available at your appointment. More information about measles and MMR vaccine can be found at healthlinkbc.ca and immunizebc.ca.