



Press Release

Nash County Health Department
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For Immediate Release

Nash County Reports Potential Measles Exposure in Nash County

NASH COUNTY, N.C. — The Nash County Health Department is notifying the public of a potential measles exposure at UNC Health Nash Emergency Department after a child who was seen at the hospital on Monday, Jan. 27, later tested positive for measles. The unvaccinated child became ill after traveling from another country where measles outbreaks have recently been reported. To protect the individual and their family's privacy, no additional information about this individual will be released.

Individuals who were at the UNC Health Nash Emergency Department between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. on Jan. 27 may have been exposed and should review their vaccination status and monitor for symptoms. Health officials are working closely with the hospital to identify and notify individuals who may have been directly exposed. At this time, the risk to the general public remains low.

Measles is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable disease that is spread by direct person-to-person contact and through the air. The virus can live for up to two hours in the air where the infected person was present. Symptoms of measles usually begin 7-14 days after exposure, but can appear up to 21 days after exposure and may include:

- High fever (may spike to more than 104 degrees)
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Tiny white spots on the inner cheeks, gums and roof of the mouth (Koplik Spots) two to three days after symptoms begin
- A rash that is red, raised, blotchy; usually starts on face, spreads to trunk, arms and legs three to five days after symptoms begin

- Measles can also cause complications including diarrhea, pneumonia, encephalitis (swelling of the brain), and suppression of the immune system.

Anyone who develops symptoms should call ahead before visiting a doctor's office, urgent care, or emergency department to prevent possible spread to others.

"The health and safety of our community is our top priority," said Bill Hill, director of Nash County Health and Human Services. "We want residents to be aware of this potential exposure, check their vaccination records, and contact us if they have questions. Vaccination remains the best protection against measles."

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services recommends all unvaccinated individuals ages one year and older receive measles vaccination to protect themselves and those around them. Parents of infants ages 6 to 11 months should consult their child's pediatrician for guidance. "The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is safe and highly effective," said Hill. "Two doses provide strong, long-lasting protection."

Nash County residents can contact their health care provider or call the Nash County Health Department clinic at 252-459-9819 to schedule a vaccination appointment or address their concerns regarding possible exposure.

About the Nash County Health Department

The Nash County Health Department serves residents of Nash County, North Carolina by providing a valuable and diverse range of public health services focused on the early detection and treatment of health problems, disease prevention, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Through clinical care, prevention programs, health education, and community partnerships, the department works to protect public health, reduce the spread of disease, and support the overall well-being of individuals and families across the county.

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