



# COUNTY OF YOLO

Health and Human Services Agency

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## HEALTH ALERT

Date: February 14, 2024

To: Yolo County Healthcare Providers

From: Aimee Sisson, MD, MPH, Yolo County Public Health Officer

Subject: Increasing measles risk

### Key Messages

- Measles cases are rising globally, with recent cases reported among international travelers arriving in California.
- Providers should consider measles in patients with fever, rash, and at least one of cough, conjunctivitis, or coryza, particularly if they have traveled outside of North America, transited through U.S. international airports, or interacted with international visitors, including at tourist attractions in the U.S.
- If measles is suspected, airborne precautions should be instituted immediately to prevent measles exposures in healthcare settings.
- Suspected measles cases should be promptly reported to Yolo County Public Health by telephone, even before laboratory confirmation.
- Ensure that patients are up to date with measles vaccinations, especially if travel abroad is planned.

### Background

Measles cases are increasing globally due to reduced measles vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since December 2023, there have been three cases of measles reported in California, compared to four California cases during all of 2023. All three recent cases have been among international travelers.

### Recommendations

Providers should suspect measles if compatible symptoms and risk factor(s) are present.

- Symptoms:
  - At least one of the “3 Cs” – cough, coryza and conjunctivitis AND
  - Febrile rash illness (rash typically starts on the face/head and descends, but can present atypically)

**Davis**  
600 A Street  
Davis, CA 95616  
Mental Health (530) 757-5530

**West Sacramento**  
500 Jefferson Boulevard  
West Sacramento, CA 95605  
Service Center (916) 375-6200  
Mental Health (916) 375-6350  
Public Health (916) 375-6380

**Winters**  
111 East Grant Avenue  
Winters, CA 95694  
Service Center (530) 406-4444

**Woodland**  
25 & 137 N. Cottonwood Street  
Woodland, CA 95695  
Service Center (530) 661-2750  
Mental Health (530) 666-8630  
Public Health (530) 666-8645

- Risk factors:
  - In the prior 3 weeks, any of: travel outside of North America, transit through U.S. international airports, or interaction with international visitors (including at a U.S. tourist attraction)

Steps for providers to take when patients present with febrile rash illness:

- Isolate patient immediately, in an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) if possible. If no AIIR is available, the patient should wear a surgical mask, bypass the waiting room, and be placed in a private room with the door closed. All staff entering the patient's room should use respiratory protection at least as effective as an N95 respirator. See [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#) (PDF) infection control guidance.
- Assess for risk factors and measles immunization status.
- If measles is suspected, contact Yolo County Public Health promptly by telephone (530-666-8670 during business hours; 530-321-3620 after hours) to discuss measles testing and control measures.
- If advised to test for measles by Yolo County Public Health, submit a specimen for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing. PCR is the preferred testing method for measles. Measles IgM testing frequently yields false positives and is not recommended.
- Certain close contacts may need post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) with MMR vaccine or immunoglobulin. PEP needs to be provided within a few days of exposure to be effective. Yolo County Public Health will provide guidance regarding which individuals need PEP. Infected people are contagious from 4 days before rash onset through 4 days after rash onset.

Providers should ensure that patients are up to date on measles vaccinations at all times, and especially if travel abroad is planned. Infants 6 to 11 months old need 1 dose of measles vaccine before traveling abroad. Children 12 months and older should receive 2 doses before travel. Adults born during or after 1957 without evidence of immunity against measles should have documentation of two doses of MMR vaccine prior to travel, with the second dose administered no earlier than 28 days after the first dose.

### **Resources**

CDC: [Measles guidance for healthcare providers](#)

CDC: [January 25, 2024 COCA Now measles message](#)

CDPH: [Measles resources for California healthcare providers](#)

[CDPH: Measles Investigation Quicksheet](#)

If you have any questions about this Health Alert, please contact Dr. Sisson at [aimee.sisson@yolocounty.org](mailto:aimee.sisson@yolocounty.org) or (530) 666-8765.