

State Health Department Confirms Measles Case in Monroe County

People Who Visited University of Rochester and Specific Sites in Strong Memorial Hospital May Have Been Exposed

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (February 10, 2014) -- The New York State Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed that a University of Rochester student recently treated at Strong Memorial Hospital had the measles. The student has since fully recovered and is no longer contagious. People who were potentially exposed on the University campus are being alerted. The overwhelming majority of people who might have been exposed are not at-risk because they are considered immune either due to their vaccination history or being of an age that past exposure is very likely.

The announcement comes after three cases of measles have recently been reported in New York State: one in Albany County, one in Rensselaer County, and one in Rockland County.

If you were a patient or visitor at Strong Memorial Hospital, and have not been immunized against measles, you may be at-risk for contracting the disease IF you were in any of the following locations within the facility or passed through them:

- The Emergency Department waiting room from Jan. 31 at 10:09 pm to Feb. 1 at 1:41 am.
- In the Emergency Department treatment areas from Jan. 31 at 10:41 pm to Feb. 1 at 10:22 pm. *
- In the Extended Observation unit from Feb. 1 at 7:22 pm to Feb. 3 at 9:45 am.

Strong Memorial is in the process of notifying patients who were in these areas during these times and has established the following Information Line for individuals seeking further information: **585-275-0301**.

The University of Rochester has checked the vaccination records of its students and is preparing to inform faculty and staff about what steps will be required to prevent the spread of the illness. Anyone who visited the University of Rochester's River Campus between Monday, Jan. 27, and Friday, Jan. 31, may have been exposed. Individuals who were at any of these locations during the timeframe listed above, and not immune to measles or not sure of their measles immunity, should contact their primary care physician, local emergency room, or the county health department where they reside.

Individuals are not at-risk of contracting measles if they are immune. A person is considered immune if he or she has received two doses of Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine, **OR** if he or she was born before January 1, 1957, **OR** has a history of laboratory-confirmed measles, **OR** has a blood test confirming measles immunity. Any of the above confers immunity.

Individuals who are not immune to measles, and who become ill with rash or fever should call their medical providers, local emergency room, or county health department and let them know of a possible measles exposure BEFORE visiting the office so steps can be taken to avoid possibly exposing others.

About Measles

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus and is spread by contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected people. Measles can lead to serious side effects and, in rare cases, death. Measles symptoms usually appear in 10 to 12 days, but can occur as late as 18 days after exposure. Symptoms generally appear in two stages:

- In the first stage, which lasts two to four days, the individual may have a runny nose, cough and a slight fever. Eyes may become reddened and sensitive to light while the fever gradually rises each day, often peaking as high as 103° to 105° F. Small bluish white spots surrounded by a reddish area may also appear on the gums and inside of the cheeks.
- The second stage begins on the third to seventh day, and consists of a red blotchy rash lasting five to six days. The rash usually begins on the face and then spreads downward and outward, reaching the hands and feet. The rash fades in the same order that it appeared, from head to extremities. Although measles is usually considered a childhood disease, it can be contracted at any age.

The single best way to prevent measles is to be vaccinated. Most New Yorkers have been vaccinated, but if unsure, they should check with their physician. Individuals should receive 2 doses of MMR vaccine to be protected. The first dose should be given at 12-15 months of age and the second dose is routinely given at 4 to 6 years of age, but may be given as soon as 28 days after the first dose. Anyone at any age who is not immune to measles, and has no condition that would prohibit receiving the vaccine, should receive 2 doses of MMR vaccine at least 28 days apart.

It is also important to note that travelers should be up-to-date on their vaccinations; since January 2014 there have been 6 cases of measles reported in the United States from travelers to foreign countries.

More information about measles can be found at:

http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/measles/fact_sheet.htm.

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***Editor's Note:** These times reflect a one-hour period *before* the student was in these areas (to account for any slight delays in log-in time) and a two-hour period after the student left the area (as the virus remains alive in air and on surfaces.) This explains the overlap in times.

Contacts:

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