



Serving Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet & Otsego Counties

April 2025

Dear Families,

As many of you may be aware, there are several large measles outbreaks occurring throughout the country as well as in Ontario, Canada. Recently, a local outbreak of measles was reported in Montcalm County, and several cases in other Michigan counties related to travel continue to be reported.

Measles is one of the most contagious respiratory viruses and historically has caused significant illness in children. Thankfully, the measles vaccine is extremely effective and has been safely used for decades, drastically reducing illness and deaths. More than 97% of people who receive the routine recommended two doses of Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine are immune from measles infection. Measles (MMR) vaccine is typically given at 12-15 months of age and again at 4-6 years of age (before starting kindergarten).

We want to be sure that those who wish to be vaccinated against measles have the opportunity to do so. Measles (MMR) vaccine is widely available at most physician offices and at health departments. The vaccine provides lifelong immunity.

In general, a 95% vaccination rate within a community will prevent outbreaks of measles disease. In our district (Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego Counties), approximately 85% of school age children have received both recommended doses of measles (MMR) vaccine.

Measles can be spread to others through the air and by both direct and indirect contact. The measles virus will live in the air and on objects for as long as 2 hours, infecting 90% of susceptible people even after the infected person has left the room. People usually develop symptoms 7-10 days after exposure, but it can take up to 21 days.

- The first sign of measles is usually a high fever, along with a runny nose, red eyes, cough, and sore throat, and eventually the total-body rash.
- The disease can be passed on to others from 4 days before the rash develops until 4 days after.

For more information on MMR vaccination, contact your physician or the health department at 800-432-4121 or visit nwhealth.org.

Additional information on measles can be found at:



Sincerely,

Joshua Meyerson, Medical Director
Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Shannon Klonowski, Health Officer
Health Department of Northwest Michigan