

Health Alert: Potential Case of Measles in Westchester County Child Care Center

Measles can be dangerous to babies and young children.

What are measles?



Measles is a serious respiratory disease that causes a rash and fever. It is very contagious. You can catch it just by being in a room where someone with measles coughed or sneezed.

Children Need to be Immunized

It is the Council's belief, as well as the Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, and the Department of Health, that all children should be vaccinated and remain current with their vaccinations by following the current

[recommended immunization schedule](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf)

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Measles is very contagious and can be dangerous for anyone who is unvaccinated or whose natural immunity is suppressed. Now is a good time to check with your doctor about your own and your children's measles vaccine status, and to get the MMR vaccine if you are not up to date.

ALERT: Westchester County Department of Health

<https://health.westchestergov.com/news/alerts>

What happens if a child with measles is in child care?

- The child diagnosed with measles **must stay home** until cleared by the local department of health or their health care provider.
- Program/provider must **report case** to:
 - local health department
 - licensor or registrar
- Program/provider must **notify all parents/guardians and program staff**.
- Parents and staff need to **monitor children** for any symptoms.

https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2170/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIKDm-9On3wIVEozICh3fLgpoEAAAYASAAEgLO9fD_BwE
- **Ensure immunizations are up-to-date** for all children and staff.

<https://health.westchestergov.com/news/alerts>
- Consult health department for children who have not received the measles vaccine. The children may not be allowed to attend care.
- The department of health may require the program to close until proper cleaning and follow other requirements.

How to limit the spread:

The best way to protect children from becoming infected is to have them vaccinated. The CDC reports that the majority of measles cases were from people who were unvaccinated.

- Review children's immunization records to ensure that children are up-to-date with the recommended immunizations.
- Review the program's Exclusion Criteria and Infection Control Policies & Procedures
- Provide educational materials to parents and staff on the importance of immunizations

Can an unvaccinated child be in child care?

Some areas of NYS are currently experiencing measles outbreak including lower Hudson Valley and parts of NYC. Due to this recent measles outbreak, there have been many questions regarding program requirements in accepting unvaccinated children.

Child Care Programs/Providers:

- Can choose to only enroll children who are following the current recommended immunization schedule as per their policy
- Can choose to update this policy when needed when there are outbreaks of a vaccine preventable disease.
- Children who are not fully immunized for any reason must be excluded from care whenever there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable illness. The child may return only upon approval from the local health department or their health care provider. Must have children's up-to-date immunization records showing that they are maintained to the most current [Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf): <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf>
- It is highly recommended that any program that cares for school-age children require a copy of children's physicals and immunization records to ensure the safety of all children in care.

Resources

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) info on Vaccines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html>

Vaccine Myths Debunked (do you have all the facts)

<https://www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/understanding-vaccines/vaccine-myths-debunked/>

Information about vaccines

The County Health Department offers appointments for MMR vaccine at no cost for children and adults who are under-insured, uninsured or are college students. To schedule a Friday vaccine visit at the County clinics in Yonkers or White Plains, call (914) 995-5800

Questions

Parents Call: The County Health Department 914-813-5000 or your child's doctor

Programs and Providers Call: Elissa Guzzardi 914-761-3456 x154