

## Measles in the News

From January 1 to March 14, 2019, 268 individual cases of measles have been confirmed in 15 states, including 1 case in NH (a traveler).

Measles in a child care center can be serious and disruptive. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that adults, including childcare center staff, as well as children be protected against measles and get vaccinated, if needed, according to their age and health status.

Because children under age 12 months are too young to be vaccinated, it is important that those around them are protected and do not spread the disease.

Child care centers should:

- Follow the NH requirements for documenting immunization of children in the center. More information on NH Child Care Immunization requirements can be found at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/immunization/ccproviders.htm>
- Encourage families to speak with their doctor about their child's vaccination status and be sure your child care records are up to date.
- Promptly notify NH public health officials (603-271-4496) of any suspected measles cases and take steps to minimize the risk of measles spreading to other children. The NH Division of Public Health Services will provide guidance on how to clean, how to notify parents, and how to ensure that unvaccinated children remain at home for 21 days after exposure to the last measles case.
- Remember that measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease. It starts with a fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat, and is followed by a rash that spreads all over the body. An infected person can spread measles to others even before developing symptoms—from four days before they develop the measles rash through four days afterward.

The best way to protect against measles is to get the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine (MMR vaccine). CDC recommends routine childhood immunization for MMR, with the first dose at 12-15 months of age, and the second dose at 4-6 years of age (or at least 28 days after the first dose). Easy-to-read immunization schedules for all ages are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>

Thank you for helping to keep NH free of measles! For immunization questions, contact the NH Immunization Program at 603-271-4482.