

# News Release



## Alameda County Public Health Department

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## MAKING TRAVEL PLANS?

### MAKE SURE YOU'RE IMMUNIZED AGAINST MEASLES

#### Public Health Departments Urge Vaccination Before International Travel

**County of Alameda, CA.** – People planning international travel should ensure they have already received the recommended two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Nationwide, measles cases now total 704 in 2019, the highest since 1994. Nearly all these cases have been linked back to international travel by unvaccinated people and subsequent spread in unvaccinated populations in the U.S.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends two doses of MMR vaccine for everyone: the first dose at 12-15 months of age and the second dose at 4-6 years of age. Adults travelling internationally should get vaccinated for measles if they did not receive the two doses as children. Vaccination is the best protection against measles.

[Talk to your doctor about travel immunizations](#) at least 4-6 weeks before traveling. For those travelling internationally with a baby older than 6 months but younger than 12 months, the CDC recommends that the baby receive an early dose of MMR vaccine. Infants and young children who contract measles are at risk of serious complications. More information about recommended vaccines for travelers is located on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmr/public/index.html>.

"Measles is a very serious disease. As a parent, a pediatrician, and a public health official, I am thankful there is a safe, effective, and widely available vaccine that keeps you protected for life," said Alameda County Interim Health Officer Dr. Erica Pan. "We are fortunate to have high vaccination rates in our county so we benefit from community immunity. This means that babies and people with medical conditions who can't be vaccinated are protected because their surrounding community is vaccinated."

Measles is still common in many parts of the world in Europe, Asia, the Pacific, South America, and Africa, including the Philippines, Israel, India, and the Ukraine. For example, the Philippines has already reported over 12,000 measles cases and over 200 deaths this year. If you are planning a trip, protect yourself against diseases that are more common in the country you are visiting.

Measles immunizations are available at your healthcare provider, local pharmacy, or health clinic. Locate a place that offers the measles vaccine on Vaccine Finder: <https://vaccinefinder.org/>. Free or low-cost immunizations for those who are uninsured or under-insured are also advertised on the Alameda County website at <http://www.acphd.org/clinics>.

In response to measles cases in the Bay Area, Alameda County Public Health Department has implemented strategies to control the spread of this disease, including:

- Identifying people who may have been exposed to measles and ensuring they are immune to measles.
- Preventing the possible spread of measles to others by limiting activities of people who are not immune and who may have been exposed.
- Consulting with local health care providers regarding suspect measles cases and helping ensure appropriate testing if indicated.
- Isolating people who are infectious to prevent the spread of measles to others.
- Strongly advising individuals who are not immune to receive the measles vaccine.
- [Notifying the public](#) and local media when necessary of specific public locations where measles exposures may have occurred.

Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90 percent of the people close to that person who are not immune will also become infected. A person with measles can spread the disease to others even before they have any symptoms. A person can develop measles from 7 to 21 days after being exposed to someone who is contagious with measles. Common symptoms of measles include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, and a rash.

If you are unsure of your immunization status or may have had contact with someone with measles, check our guide [here](#), or consult with your doctor. If you develop symptoms of measles, it is very important to **call ahead to any medical facility** before going there and tell them that you may have been exposed to measles, so that the facility can take measures to protect other patients and visitors.

For more information about measles, visit: <http://www.acphd.org/measles.aspx>

The Alameda County Public Health Department also makes available information about measles for doctors: <http://www.acphd.org/measles/clinicians.aspx>.

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