

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEASLES CASE CONFIRMED IN ST. LUCIE COUNTY
~Vaccination provides the best protection for all Floridians~

TALLAHASSEE---The Florida Department of Health has confirmed a local case of measles in an unvaccinated six- year-old child in St. Lucie County. Local health officials immediately notified the St. Lucie School District superintendent and are working closely with district staff to limit any potential exposure and protect the community. Measles is a serious respiratory disease caused by a virus of the same name (Measles). The disease is highly contagious and can spread to others who are unvaccinated. Interviews by the health department are underway to identify all potential contacts and exposures.

“I encourage all residents and visitors to protect themselves, their families and their communities by getting vaccinated,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Measles is a very serious disease, yet thankfully, we have a safe and proven method to prevent measles through vaccination.”

The Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) shot is the best way to protect against measles. Those who are fully immunized have very little risk of developing measles. Ideally, children should receive two doses, the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second dose at four to six years of age. Children and adults who have not ever received MMR vaccine in the past should also get vaccinated. Pregnant women should talk with their doctors about vaccination as there are serious risks associated with measles and unborn babies.

The symptoms of measles generally begin approximately seven to 14 days after a person is exposed to someone with measles, and include the following:

- Blotchy rash
- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Feeling run down, achy (malaise)
- Tiny white spots with bluish-white centers found inside the mouth (Koplik’s spots)

People who develop these symptoms should contact their health care provider right away. Measles is spread through the air by infectious droplets and is highly contagious. It can be transmitted from four days before the rash becomes visible to four days after the rash appears.

Adolescents and adults may require two doses of MMR, people with underlying health conditions should discuss additional booster doses with their health care provider to determine need. The department encourages all Floridians who have not been immunized to get

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vaccinated immediately.

Measles is very rare in countries and regions of the world that are able to keep vaccination coverage high. There are still sporadic cases of measles in the United States because visitors from other countries or U.S. citizens traveling abroad can become infected before or during travel and spread the infection to unvaccinated or unprotected persons.

For more information about measles and vaccination information, go to <http://www.flhealth.gov> or www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html. Residents who have questions about measles or how to get vaccinated are encouraged to call their local county health department. A complete listing of county health departments is available at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/county-health-departments/find-a-county-health-department/index.html>.

For more information, visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/vaccine-preventable-disease/measles/index.htm>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention measles webpage is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/>.

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