



PUBLIC HEALTH AND PARAMEDIC SERVICES

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February 20, 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Re: Measles Update

There has been increased measles activity in Southwestern Ontario with confirmed cases in neighbouring areas. While measles cases are usually linked to travel outside of Ontario, since measles is highly contagious, a single case can result in local outbreaks, particularly among unimmunized children and adolescents.

Measles can cause serious illness and death. Infants under one year of age, unimmunized pregnant individuals, and people with weakened immune systems are at increased risk of complications.

Measles symptoms begin 7 to 21 days after infection and may include high fever, cough, runny nose, red watery eyes and a red rash lasting 4 to 7 days.

What can I do to protect myself and my family?

1. Ensure you are up to date with measles vaccinations.

Individuals without an immunization record of their measles vaccines may need to repeat vaccination - it is not harmful to receive an additional dose(s).

Children

- Children receive two doses of measles vaccine as part of routine vaccination: one dose at 12 months of age and a second dose between 4 to 6 years old
 - Infants between 6-11 months old may receive a dose of measles vaccine if travelling (Note: will still need two additional doses of measles vaccine after their first birthday to ensure long-lasting protection)
 - Children under 4 years old who have received one dose of measles vaccine after their first birthday, may receive a second dose of measles vaccine if travelling (Note: minimum of 4 weeks between doses of measles vaccine)

Adults

- Adults born prior to 1970 are generally considered immune to measles
 - May receive one dose of measles vaccine if travelling
- Adults born in or after 1970 may have received 1 or 2 doses of measles vaccine. If one dose has been received, a second dose is recommended for:
 - Health care workers
 - Post-secondary students
 - Travellers

It is important that parents/guardians regularly report their child's vaccinations to Public Health. Health care providers do not report these vaccinations to Public Health. To report your child's vaccinations, visit regionofwaterloo.ca/vaccines.

2. Monitor for signs and symptoms of measles.

Monitor yourself and your family for signs and symptoms of measles, especially after returning from international travel or areas experiencing measles outbreaks. If you develop symptoms:

- Limit contact with other people
- Call your health care provider or a walk-in clinic and notify them about your symptoms before the appointment so they can take precautions to prevent others from getting sick
- Wear a medical mask when seeking care

For more information about measles, please visit regionofwaterloo.ca/measles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'David Aoki', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

David Aoki
Director of Infectious Diseases and Chief Nursing Officer
Region of Waterloo Public Health and Paramedic Services