



Public Health
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NORTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

“Caring For Our Communities”

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Press Release

Date: January 4, 2019
To: All Media
From: Teri Thalhofer RN, BSN, Director
North Central Public Health District
Subject: **Confirmed Case of Measles in an individual who traveled to The Dalles and Hood River**

On January 3, 2019, OHA received confirmation of a case of measles in a person who was infectious and spent time in The Dalles and Hood River between December 26 and December 31, 2018. At the time of this release, no additional cases of measles have been identified.

The individual was seen Wednesday, January 2, 2019, at a hospital in the Portland area, and measles was confirmed as the diagnosis on January 3, 2019. OHA and local public health agencies are actively monitoring the case.

“Measles is a highly contagious disease with the potential to cause significant health complications,” said North Central Public Health District’s Health Officer, Miriam McDonell, MD. “Fortunately, due to very high vaccination rates in Oregon, cases of measles are quite rare.”

OHA is working with local public health agencies to notify individuals of their potential exposure and to inform them of steps to take should they become ill, in order to prevent more cases.

This individual traveled to the region from out of the country and followed the recommended precautions to avoid exposing others, after developing a rash. Most measles cases in the US result from international travel; the disease is brought into the US by unvaccinated people who get infected in other countries.

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that spreads easily to people who are not immune. It is spread through the air after a person with measles coughs or sneezes. People with measles can spread the virus to others before they develop a rash. The virus can also linger in the air for minutes to hours after someone who is infectious has left.

Most Oregonians have been vaccinated against measles, and their risk is low. Risk may be higher for unvaccinated persons who were in these locations:

The Discovery Center	The Dalles	December 29, 2018	1:30-4:30 PM
Fred Meyer	The Dalles	December 31, 2018	5:00-6:00 PM
Doppio Café	Hood River	December 30, 2018	12:00-1:00 PM

Goodwill	Hood River	December 30, 2018	12:00-1:00 PM
Full Sail Brewery	Hood River	December 30, 2018	1:00-2:00 PM

“After being exposed to measles, it takes between 7 to 18 days for symptoms to develop. The typical rash appears approximately 2 weeks after exposure,” McDonell said.

Measles poses the highest risk to pregnant women, infants under 12 months of age and people with weakened immune systems. A person is considered immune to measles if ANY of the following apply:

1. You were born before 1957.
2. Your physician has diagnosed you with measles.
3. A blood test proves that you are immune.
4. You have been fully vaccinated against measles (two doses).

About measles

The symptoms of measles start with a fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes, followed by a red rash that usually begins on the face and spreads to the rest of the body. People are contagious with measles for four days before the rash appears and up to four days after the rash appears.

Common complications of measles include ear infection, lung infection, and diarrhea. Swelling of the brain is a rare but much more serious complication. In developed countries, one or two out of every 1,000 children with measles will die from the disease.

After someone is exposed, illness usually develops in about two weeks, sometimes longer. Oregon public health officials are advising anyone who believes they have symptoms of measles to first call their health care provider or urgent care center by telephone to create an entry plan to avoid exposing others in waiting rooms.

Anyone with questions about measles infection or the measles vaccine should call their primary care provider or their county health department. For more information on measles for the public, please [visit the OHA measles webpage](#) or call the public health departments in the following counties:

- North Central Public Health District (Wasco, Sherman and Gilliam Counties) 541-506-2600
- Hood River County Health Department 541-386-1115

(For more information, please contact North Central Public Health District at (541) 506-2600 or visit us on the web at www.ncphd.org.)

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