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MCHD HEALTH BLOG

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Public Health
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MORGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.



MEASLES PREVENTION

There has recently been an outbreak of measles in Central Ohio. Almost all of the cases have been among unvaccinated individuals in Columbus and Franklin County. However, you may be at risk if you are not old enough to have had the vaccine or if you are under vaccinated and come into contact with a positive patient. For example, children who travel to Central Ohio could be exposed during a visit to that area. The Ohio Department of Health is working closely with local health departments and healthcare providers to respond to this outbreak and educate all Ohio residents on this disease.

Measles is a very contagious virus and can make you very sick if you aren't immune to it (either by being immunized or if you've had measles in the past). Symptoms include fever, runny nose, cough, red and watery eyes, and a rash. These symptoms can last up to 10 days.

One of the most safe and best ways to prevent measles is the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Doctors recommend that children get two doses of the MMR vaccine to protect against measles. The first dose should be given to kids at 12-15 months old, and the second dose at 4-6 years old (before school entry). Adults who were born during or after 1957 should also get at least one dose of the MMR vaccine if they do not have evidence of immunity.

Since measles spreads very easily, anyone who isn't immune (either through previous illness or with the MMR vaccine) is at risk of getting measles. Babies who are younger than 12 months are also at risk because they are too young to get the MMR vaccine. You can best protect your family by making sure that everyone has had their MMR vaccines or was previously sick with measles. If you think you've been exposed to measles or you feel ill, call your doctor right away. Stay away from other people until at least four days after the rash starts or a test proves that you don't have measles.

Research has shown that the MMR vaccine is safe and effective. Getting vaccinated is much safer for people than getting measles. MCHD is here to help protect your family against this virus! The MCHD Vaccines for Children (VFC) program offers free vaccines for qualifying children, which includes the MMR vaccine. Call 740-962-4572 to schedule an appointment.