



## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Potential Measles Exposure at Chicago Midway Airport and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital**

*Call or email a health care provider if you think you were exposed*

**SPRINGFIELD** – On February 22, 2019, an Illinois resident with a now confirmed diagnosis of measles was on a flight that arrived in Concourse B at Chicago Midway Airport. The passenger was unvaccinated and infectious on that day. IDPH, along with local health departments, is investigating this isolated case.

People may have been exposed to measles if they were at Midway Airport on February 22, 2019 between 9 pm and midnight. This individual also sought treatment in the emergency department at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital on February 24, 2019. People who were in the emergency department between 11:45 am and 2:15 pm also may have been exposed, as well as individuals who were in Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital from 4:00-6:15 pm on February 24, 2019 and from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm on February 25, 2019. These are the only known public locations in Illinois where exposures occurred.

Most people are vaccinated routinely in childhood and are not at high risk. Of most concern are people who have not been vaccinated. Individuals who think they have been exposed should check with their health care provider about protection through prior vaccination or the need for vaccination.

If infected, you could develop symptoms as late as March 20, 2019. Symptoms of measles include rash, high fever, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. If you develop symptoms of measles, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends you call or email a health care provider **BEFORE** going to a medical office or emergency department. Special arrangements can be made for your evaluation while also protecting other patients and medical staff from possible infection. Local health departments are working to notify Illinois residents who were identified as being potentially exposed on the affected person's flights.

“Measles is highly contagious. However, two doses of measles vaccine are about 97 percent effective in preventing measles,” reminds IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “We urge everyone to make sure they and their family members are up-to-date on measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine and all other age-appropriate immunizations, especially if you are traveling to other countries where measles is regularly found. Getting vaccinated not only protects you, it protects others around you who are too young to get the vaccine or cannot receive it for medical reasons.”

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Measles can cause serious complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). Measles is easily spread through the air when someone coughs or sneezes. People can also get sick when they come in contact with mucus or saliva from an infected person.

This most recent case is not related to the four cases reported in Champaign County earlier this month. This unvaccinated individual traveled overseas to countries where measles is regularly found. It's important to make sure you are up to date on all [routine, recommended vaccinations](#), such as MMR vaccine, before traveling abroad. For travel specific vaccinations, see your health care professional at least one to two months before any international travel. You may need this much time to complete a vaccine series, and your body needs time to build up immunity. Find out [vaccine recommendations and requirements for your travel destination](#).

For more information about measles, contact your health care provider, or visit the Illinois Department of Public Health website at <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/measles>.

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