

Houston Area Health Alert Network - Case of Measles at Hobby Airport in Houston – September 4, 2018

****Please distribute this information to all appropriate colleagues****

The Houston Health Department was recently notified that someone with measles traveled through Hobby Airport in Houston during a period in which he was contagious on 8/21/2018 and 8/22/2018. The traveler did not visit restaurants or other venues while at Hobby Airport, and he did not leave Hobby Airport between connecting flights. However, he was in the waiting areas at the terminal at Hobby Airport for approximately one hour each day between his connecting flights.

The Houston Health Department is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other state and local health departments to directly contact passengers traveling on the same flight as the traveler with measles.

This alert is to notify providers that persons in contact with the traveler may have a risk of developing measles. Symptoms may appear at any time up to September 12, 2018.

The Houston Health Department is investigating another case of measles in Houston. (A HAN alert was sent on 8/29/18). Based on information obtained thus far, there is no discernible common exposure or epidemiological link between the two measles cases.

Healthcare providers are again requested to aid in this investigation by considering measles when evaluating febrile rash illnesses and by reporting suspected measles cases promptly to their local health department. By Texas statute, suspected measles is to be reported immediately.

The clinical case definition for measles is an illness characterized by all of the following:

- Generalized maculopapular rash lasting 3 or more days
- Temperature greater than or equal to 101°F (38.3°C)
- Cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis

Measles cases may present with a nonspecific febrile illness before onset of the characteristic rash. The incubation period for measles is generally 14 days from exposure to rash; however, it can range from 7-18 days. Measles is highly communicable, with >90% secondary attack rate among susceptible persons. **Measles may be transmitted from 4 days prior to 4 days after rash onset.** Measles can occur in previously immunized individuals

It is imperative that measles cases be reported immediately. Healthcare providers must report cases to their local health department as soon as measles is suspected. Health departments will assist with appropriate shipment and testing of specimens.

The Texas Department of State Health Services laboratory in Austin can conduct measles testing:

- A blood specimen for serology and throat swab for viral culture or PCR should be collected at the first contact with a suspected measles case. Currently PCR testing is only available through public health laboratories. Local health departments can help to coordinate testing.

Again, you are asked to consider measles when evaluating febrile rash illnesses and to report any suspect measles cases to your local health department immediately.