HEALTH ALERT

JB Pritzker, Governor | Sameer Vohra, MD, JD, MA, Director

Train/Travel-Related Measles Exposures in Illinois and Surrounding States

Summary and Action Items

1. Illinois is alerting clinicians to new exposure locations, several related to train travel throughout the state and in neighboring states.
2. Clinicians should review exposure locations and vaccination history for those who present with measles- like symptoms to determine testing, infection prevention, and post- exposure prophylactic needs.
3. Clinicians are strongly recommended to evaluate pre-travel MMR vaccination needs for those who are non-immune, not just prior to international travel but also travel to domestic areas with measles outbreaks.
4. Highlight that updates to the IDPH measles dashboard are expected soon, providing additional information on cases in Illinois.

Situational Update

In early September, IDPH issued a health advisory titled **Measles Outbreak Identified Amid Increasing Regional Activity Update** to alert clinicians and local health departments to a new outbreak in central Illinois, as well as to ongoing outbreaks in several surrounding states. Since that time, the outbreak in central Illinois has grown to 16 cases, all among unvaccinated people or people with unknown vaccine status. Additionally, IDPH was alerted to several new exposure locations in Illinois, including Amtrak train routes, train depots, and exposure locations in St. Louis, Missouri. IDPH is also investigating and monitoring an out-of-state case exposure at a southern Illinois hospital and a new case in the Metro East area.

Outbreaks are ongoing near the Illinois border in Southern Iowa, Southwest Wisconsin, and Western Kentucky. National activity remains elevated as well, including a large outbreak in Pennsylvania where four measles-related deaths have been reported in unvaccinated residents—the first measles-related deaths in the U.S. since 2025 and the first in Pennsylvania in 35 years.

Reviewing Measles Exposure Risk and Ensuring Updated MMR Vaccination

The recent measles-related deaths in Pennsylvania underscore the ongoing risk of severe disease and the importance of timely vaccination. Clinicians should proactively review MMR vaccination status with their patients, especially infants approaching their first birthday, individuals who are behind on recommended doses, and pregnant individuals. Clear, science-based conversations from trusted clinicians are essential to help patients understand the protection that vaccination offers and the very real risk posed by rising measles activity nationwide.

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Contact
Clinicians should contact their local health department to report cases or for additional information on local investigations. For questions or additional information about measles, please contact the IDPH Communicable Disease Control Section at 217-782-2016.

Additional Resources
IDPH: Measles

Target Audience
Local Health Departments, Infectious Disease Physicians, Hospitals, Infection Preventionists, Health Care Providers, and Laboratories.

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