

Public Health Alert for Clinicians

February 26, 2024

Dramatic Rise in Measles Cases Globally

With the current increase of measles activity globally Clinicians are strongly encouraged to consider measles as part of the differential diagnosis for those individuals who have travelled internationally or are newcomers to Canada, and present with:

- febrile illness and rash
- history suggesting that they are not immune to measles
- travel to areas with measles outbreak or known exposure to a measles case or outbreak

Measles Clinical Presentation

Symptoms of measles begin 7 – 21 days after exposure to a case of measles and include fever, coryza, cough, and conjunctivitis. Small white spots (Koplik's spots) can appear on the inside of the mouth and throat but are not always present. Then, 3 – 7 days after the start of symptoms, a red maculopapular rash appears on the face and then progresses down the body.

Testing and Precautions

Individuals with suspected measles should be IMMEDIATELY ISOLATED in a negative-pressure room with door closed. If you do not have one, patient should wear a surgical mask and be placed in a single room with door closed. Because measles virus can remain airborne for two hours, no other patient should use the room for at least two hours after. It is essential to complete ALL of the following tests to confirm diagnosis:

- Nasopharyngeal swab/aspirate or throat swab
- Blood Specimen
- Clean Catch Urine

Duty to Report

Timely reporting of communicable diseases is essential for their control. Clinicians are required to report all diseases of public health significance (DOPHS) as per the requirements in accordance with Ontario Reg 135/18 and amendments under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990. Refer to the [DOPHS List](#) for all reporting requirements. Reporting forms are available on the WECHU website (www.wechu.org/forms). Reporting forms should be filled out completely and faxed to 226-783-2132.

For questions or concerns, please call 519-258-2146 ext. 1420 during regular office hours, and 519-973-4510 during after-hours and weekends. For more information, visit:

1. [Measles: For health professionals \(PHAC\)](#)
2. [Appendix 1: Case Definitions and Disease Specific Information: Measles](#)
3. [Measles Information for Clinicians \(PHO\)](#)
4. [Vaccine Preventable Disease: Surveillance Report to December 31, 2019: Measles \(PHAC\)](#)
5. [Measles vaccines: Canadian Immunization Guide \(PHAC\)](#)
6. [DOPHS List](#)

