



# News Release

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**Sunrise Fire-Rescue Department**

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For Release: IMMEDIATE

## **Florida Residents Urged to Get Vaccinated against Measles**

*Contacts of measles cases being followed in Florida*

The **Florida Department of Health** is working with other state and federal officials to monitor individuals who may have been exposed to measles cases across the state. In the past two weeks, four cases of measles have been identified and reported among travelers with unknown or no measles vaccinations who visited Florida.

The department continues to work closely with the medical provider community in an effort to maintain its current level of readiness to identify cases and respond to any diagnosed cases of measles in Florida.

The most effective form of protection from this virus is through vaccination. Children should be immunized against measles with the combination measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) and should receive two doses, with the first at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second at four to six years of age. People with underlying health conditions should discuss with their health care provider to determine the need for additional booster doses. The department encourages all Floridians who have not been immunized to get vaccinated immediately.

“In Florida, more than 93 percent of kindergartners are vaccinated against this potentially life threatening virus,” said Dr. Tommy Schechtman, President, Florida Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics. “But in a time when vaccines are readily available and safe, every child who can be, should be vaccinated.”

Measles is very rare in countries and regions of the world where vaccination coverage is high. There are still sporadic cases of measles in the United States because travelers who are not fully immunized can become infected before or during travel abroad and spread the infection to those who are not protected by the vaccine.

Measles is spread through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing and is highly contagious. It can be transmitted from four days before the rash becomes visible to four days after the rash appears. The symptoms of measles generally begin approximately seven to 14 days after a person is exposed to someone with measles, and include the following:

- Blotchy rash
- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Feeling run down, achy (malaise)
- Tiny white spots with bluish-white centers found inside the mouth (Koplik's spots)

Anyone who has these symptoms should contact his or her healthcare provider. For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html).