



Queen Anne's County Department of Health

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May 3, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

With the recent confirmed outbreak of measles in Maryland, let's take a moment to discuss the importance of protecting your family from this illness. Measles is an extremely contagious disease that often begins with a high fever (103°F- 105°F) and cold like symptoms such as cough, runny nose, and conjunctivitis. A maculopapular rash follows this, which is red and covered with small bumps that can last for 5-6 days. The rash usually begins on the head and then spreads to the neck, torso, arms and legs. The rash generally appears 14 days after a person is exposed. The illness is typically mild or moderately severe but can result in complications such as pneumonia and death.

Measles is spread through the air and can even be spread in a closed area (e.g. classroom) up to 2 hours after a person with measles has left the area. A person with measles can spread disease from 4 days before a rash appears until 4 days after the rash appears.

Students suspected of having measles will be excluded from school and may return to school following the 4th day after the rash appears. Exposed unvaccinated students and staff should receive a dose of vaccine as soon as possible. Those unvaccinated students and staff that receive vaccine will be allowed back to school immediately. Unvaccinated students and staff who do not receive vaccine due to medical or religious reasons will be excluded from school until 21 days after the onset of rash in the last case of measles.

Measles can be prevented with appropriate vaccination. Measles vaccine is administered to children in combination with mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) in a two dose series. Please check with your healthcare provider to make sure your child's shots are up-to-date.

Please watch your child for any symptoms of measles (cold-like symptoms, rash) over the next few months. If you notice any of these symptoms in your child, please notify your primary care physician and the nurse at your child's school as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph A. Ciotola, Jr.".

Joseph A. Ciotola, Jr., M.D.

Health Officer

