



# Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



## Measles Preparedness

Measles cases are on the rise across Ontario, with an ongoing multi-jurisdictional outbreak affecting multiple areas in Ontario. As of February 26, 2025, there were 177 cases of measles reported in Ontario related to this outbreak predominantly in Grand Erie and Southwestern public health units. Currently there are no cases in Durham Region, but the Health Department has been managing measles contacts who were exposed in other areas.

### Actions Requested

1. Consider measles in your differential diagnoses, particularly in returning travellers with respiratory symptoms or those who have travelled to high-risk areas.
2. Vaccinate patients who are not up-to-date and planning to travel.
3. Primary care providers are encouraged to test clinically stable patients in their offices with appropriate [IPAC precautions](#).
  - **Only send patients to a hospital emergency department if clinically indicated and after calling ahead, to minimize high risk contacts in hospital settings.**
4. Have a defined process to rapidly identify and isolate patients who may have measles to protect staff and patients.
  - Promptly isolate any patient with suspect or confirmed measles in a single room with negative air flow (airborne isolation room) if available. If not, the patient should wear a surgical mask and be placed in a single room with the door closed. Isolate the exam room for 2 hours after the patient has left.
5. **All health care workers, regardless of presumptive immunity to measles, are to wear a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator when providing care to a patient with suspect or confirmed measles.**
  - N95 respirators and other PPE can be ordered through the [Ontario PPE Supply Portal](#).
  - See [Interim IPAC recommendations from Public Health Ontario](#)

### Clinical Presentation

The key signs and symptoms of measles include:

- Fever 38.3 degrees Celsius or higher (oral)
- Cough, runny nose (coryza) or red eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Generalized maculopapular rash for at least three days

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](https://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



# Testing

If your patient presents with compatible symptoms and risk factors, order the following tests (or search for “Measles” on the main PHOL website):

Test	Specimen type/volume	Collection Kit	Timing of collection
Measles virus detection (PCR)	Nasopharyngeal swab	Virus respiratory kit (order #390082)	Within 7 days of rash onset
Measles virus detection (PCR)	Throat swab	Virus culture kit (order #390081)	Within 7 days of rash onset
Measles virus detection (PCR)	Urine – 50.0 mL	Sterile container	Within 14 days of rash onset
Measles serology (diagnosis)	Whole blood (5.0 mL) or serum (1.0 mL)	Blood, clotted-vacutainer tubes (SST)	Acute: Within 7 days of rash onset  Convalescent: 7-10 days after the acute; preferably 10 to 30 days after acute

- Ensure an adequate supply of specimen collection kits and review the expiry dates. Specimens submitted in an expired collection kit will be rejected for testing.
- Testing kits can be ordered from [Public Health Ontario Laboratory](#).
- Ensure that the PCR tests are ordered as serology alone is not sufficient.
- Mark **"suspect measles"** on each of the lab requisitions. Mark **STAT** on the outside of the package.
- Specimens must be stored and shipped cold and separate from routine specimens.

Contact Durham Region Health Department (905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 **ext. 2996**; after hours 905-576-9991 or 1-800-372-1104) to arrange specimen transport to Public Health Ontario Laboratory.

# Vaccination

- **Vaccinate patients who are not up-to-date with measles vaccine especially with planned travel, including infants 6 months of age or older.** Ensure the second booster was received by 4 to 6 years of age.
- Ensure all healthcare staff are up to date with either two doses of documented measles vaccination OR documented laboratory evidence of immunity.
- Order the MMR vaccine through regular monthly vaccine orders (order forms are available on [www.durham.ca/hcp](http://www.durham.ca/hcp) under Forms, Order).

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# Vaccination – continued

## Publicly Funded Immunization Criteria for Measles

Routine Criteria:

- ≥1 year of age

High-Risk Criteria:

- 6 to 11 months of age and travelling to areas where measles is of concern, including high-risk areas in Ontario (2 additional doses are required at ≥1 year of age)
- Adults 26 years of age and over who have only received one dose of MMR are eligible to receive a second dose:
  - If they are health care workers
  - If they are post-secondary students
  - If they are travelling to areas where measles is of concern, including high-risk areas in Ontario
  - Based on health care provider clinical judgement

## Reporting

**Measles is an immediately reportable disease in Ontario.** Please continue to report any cases of measles promptly to Durham Region Health Department:

- Phone: 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 ext. 2996
- After Hours Phone: 905-576-9991 or 1-800-372-1104
- Confidential Fax: 905-666-6215
- Access the online Notification Form for Diseases of Public Health Significance at [www.durham.ca/hcp](http://www.durham.ca/hcp)

## More Information

- [Measles Case and Contact Information Hub](http://durham.ca/measles) – (or [durham.ca/measles](http://durham.ca/measles))
- [Information about Measles for HCP](http://durham.ca/HCP) – (or [durham.ca/HCP](http://durham.ca/HCP))
- [Measles: Information for Health Care Providers](#) – Public Health Ontario
- [PHOL Test Information Index](#) – Public Health Ontario Laboratory

March 11, 2025

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