



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO M.D.
DIRECTOR
Phone: (808) 586-4410
Fax: (808) 586-4444

For Immediate Release: February 16, 2008

07-19

DOH CONFIRMS MEASLES CASE IN RESIDENT

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health has confirmed measles illness in an adult resident of Oahu that traveled to Europe and returned to Honolulu via San Francisco on February 5, 2008. The individual was highly contagious from February 6 – 14, and the DOH is identifying and notifying contacts of possible exposure.

Dr. Paul Effler, DOH State Epidemiologist said, “Measles is rarely seen in the U.S. today because of school vaccination requirements, but in other parts of the world the illness is more common. Since vaccination for measles begins between 12 and 15 months, we are particularly concerned about infants under the age of 15 months without vaccination who may have been exposed.”

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection characterized by fever, cough, runny nose, conjunctivitis (i.e., red eyes), and a rash. It is transmitted by direct contact with droplets from a patient’s respiratory tract or, less commonly, by airborne spread. Patients are contagious from 1 to 2 days before onset of symptoms (3-5 days before the rash) to 4 days after appearance of the rash. The incubation period is generally 8-12 days, with a range from 7-18 days after exposure. Complications of measles include ear infection, pneumonia, and occasionally encephalitis. Death occurs in 1 to 3 of every 1,000 cases reported in the United States. Fatality rates are increased in children younger than 5 years of age and immunocompromised children.

Individuals born prior 1957 or who have documented measles vaccinations or laboratory evidence of immunity or documentation of physician-diagnosed measles are considered immune to measles. All other exposed persons should be considered potentially susceptible and should consult their physician.

Any person developing an illness within 18 days after being exposed to measles should be aware that the illness may be measles, remain at home and call their health care provider.

###

For information contact about this release contact:

Janice Okubo
Communications Office
Cell: (808) 368-6006