



February 21, 2019

Dear Students, School Staff, and Parents,

As you have heard, there is a measles outbreak at three schools in Vancouver. Please note that this is a localized outbreak and that students who are attending schools not connected to the outbreak have not been exposed. **There is no evidence of measles transmission into the wider Vancouver or Fraser Health community.**

Measles is a highly contagious disease that spreads through the air. It starts with fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. These symptoms develop between 7 to 21 days after a person is exposed. A characteristic rash then develops, beginning on the face and spreading down the body.

Most people in Canada are protected against infection through immunization with the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Children receive MMR at 12 months of age followed by a second dose starting at 4 years of age. **Two doses of MMR vaccine is 99% effective at preventing measles.**

The first dose of measles vaccine is provided at 12 months of age. Early doses of vaccine prior to 12 months of age are not recommended.

While there is no community outbreak, there has been increased demand for immunizations and Fraser Health has added extra immunization clinics to accommodate this increased demand.

To protect you and your family from measles, Fraser Health is recommending the following:

- If you were born on or after January 1st, 1970 and have not had two doses of measles vaccine, we recommend that you get a dose of MMR vaccine.
- If you were born on or after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970 and are unsure of your immunization history and/or if you are unsure if you've had measles infection, we recommend that you get a dose of MMR vaccine.
- If you were born before 1970 or have had measles infection in the past, you are considered protected.
- Children between one and four years of age are considered up to date for age with one dose of measles containing vaccine. A measles booster dose is due starting at age four.

It is never too late to get vaccinated. MMR vaccine is available through your family physician, some pharmacists (for those aged 5 and over), urgent primary care centres, and local public health units. The best way to protect you and your family against measles is to receive the MMR vaccine. For further information on measles please contact 8-1-1.

For information on mature minor consent in BC refer to BC HealthFile #119 available at: [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/infants-act-mature-minor-consent-and-immunization](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/infants-act-mature-minor-consent-and-immunization)