

Ephrata Office County Courthouse
PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823
509-754-6060

Moses Lake Office
1038 West Ivy Suite 1, Moses Lake WA 98837
509-766-7960



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

05/09/08

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

Theresa Fuller, Public Information Officer
509-766-7960 x24

15 measles cases now confirmed in Grant County

Public health officials uncover additional cases through investigation.

GRANT COUNTY, WA – The Grant County Health District has confirmed 15 cases of measles in Grant County, all residents of Moses Lake.

- The **first** 8 cases reported to the Grant County Health District came from a single household; 3 were confirmed by laboratory results. There were no close contacts related to school setting.
- The **later** 4 cases were laboratory confirmed over the weekend and are students from private schools in the Moses Lake area:
 - Moses Lake Christian Academy
 - Covenant Christian School
- The **newest** 3 cases have been linked to previously identified cases; there were no close contacts related to school setting.

*Please contact the
Grant County Health
District if you were at
the Soap Lake Lakeview
Skating Rink in the
evening of April 19 or
April 25.*

509-754-6060

The Lakeview Skating Rink in Soap Lake has been identified as an exposure site. If you were at the skating rink during the evenings of April 19 and April 25, please call the Grant County Health District's Ephrata office, 509-754-6060.

Public health activities during the outbreak include tracking of cases, to identify possible sources and other people who may have been exposed to the measles so that preventive measures can be taken. Vaccination protects individuals from getting the measles and therefore helps to prevent the spread of this disease which can be very serious. It is estimated that one in every 6 individuals who gets the measles has to be hospitalized for complications. Globally, measles is still one of the biggest killers of children.

Grant County Health District staff and Region 7 Public Health Epidemiologist are working with health care providers and facilities to assure necessary precautions are in place for patients with rash like illnesses entering

the facilities. Healthcare facilities are also examining the status of their own staff so that measures can be taken to assure that those caring for patients are not going to get the measles and transmit it to other patients.

The Health District has requested that Grant County schools, child cares and preschools review their student immunization records and request that staff and students not fully vaccinated with the recommended 2 doses of MMR as soon as possible.

“I personally want to thank the community for their cooperation during this outbreak. We can only beat this by working together,” Dr. Alexander Brzezny, Grant County Health Officer

“We have pulled most of our staff from their route work to assist with the outbreak response. They are working very hard and doing an amazing job,” says Peggy Grigg, Administrator/Personal Health Director for the Grant County Health District. “We do not feel this outbreak is nearing the end and ask that the public check their immunization records to make sure everyone in your family is up-to-date on ALL their immunizations. Also, if you are showing symptoms of a rash-like illness, contact your health care provider to set up an appointment to be evaluated.” Do not show up at a healthcare facility or doctor’s office without calling ahead. Measles can be easily transmitted through the air in many indoor settings.

Measles (www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/factsheet/measles.htm) spreads very easily through coughing and sneezing. A person with measles can spread the disease from four days before to four days after the day the rash starts. Symptoms of measles may include a high fever, cold-like symptoms, and a rash. It may also cause more serious problems like pneumonia.

MMR (Measles Vaccine) Immunization Recommendations

- Any child 12 months age or older who has not previously been immunized should receive the first dose.
- It is routinely recommended that children receive a second dose between ages four to six years; during exposure and outbreak situations, the second dose can be given at any time as long as it is 4 weeks after the first. Having 2 doses of MMR vaccine is the best way to assure that you and your family child are immune to measles.
- Both doses must be given on or after the first birthday and at least 4 weeks apart.