



NKYHEALTH

NORTHERN KENTUCKY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



August 26, 2019

Dear School Nurse:

Cases of measles have been on the rise in the U.S. Measles is a very contagious infection, but is preventable through vaccination. Symptoms of measles, which begin about 7-14 days after exposure, include:

- High fever (may be higher than 104 degrees)
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red eyes
- Rash (3-5 days after the other symptoms start)

Complications can include diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, seizures, brain and nervous system infections, hospitalization and even death. Measles can be more severe in young infants and in pregnant women, who may have miscarriages and premature labor.

Two doses of a measles-containing vaccine, usually given as measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), are critical to preventing the spread of infection. If exposed to measles, anyone who has not been vaccinated is at risk of becoming sick.

Measles is easily transmitted from person-to-person. When an infected person sneezes or coughs, droplets spray into the air. Those droplets remain contagious in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours. Additionally, someone with measles can expose and infect others before they feel sick.

If a student develops symptoms associated with the measles, it is important to act quickly. **Isolate the student and contact a parent or guardian to pick them up from school immediately. Contact the Northern Kentucky Health Department at 859-363-2070 so that we can ensure that proper control measures are implemented.**

Since the measles virus may remain contagious in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours, **exposed surfaces should be cleaned with a detergent and then disinfected.** Utilize disinfectant products that are registered for enveloped viruses, which include influenza viruses and HIV, and follow manufacturer guidelines. The cleaning and disinfection process should be completed routinely (daily, at a minimum) in situations where an infected (or suspected) person is present. Ensure high-touch surfaces such as knobs and railings, as well as horizontal surfaces such as table tops and floors, are included in the cleaning and disinfection process.

Please contact us with any questions. Thank you for your assistance in controlling the spread of measles in school settings.

Sincerely,

Lynne M. Saddler, MD, MPH

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