

## Patient Update

March 21, 2024

Dear patients,

We are writing to share a few updates around measles cases in the community, what symptoms to monitor for, and information about the measles vaccine.

### *Measles Update*

Health authorities have reported a significant increase in measles cases globally due to a decline in measles vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic, with recent cases reported in Toronto and surrounding areas. Measles is a highly contagious disease that can spread easily to others.

Symptoms of measles includes:

- High fever
- Cold-like symptoms including cough and runny nose
- Body aches and pains
- Very red eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Small spots with white centers inside the mouth
- Red blotchy rash, which can start a few days after the first symptoms and last four to seven days

If you have these symptoms, particularly following travel, please do the following:

- Stay home and self-isolate if possible
- Call our clinics for assessment and medical advice over the phone. We ask you to inform our clerical teams of your symptoms, especially if you have recently traveled. You will be booked either a virtual appointment with your doctor or a call from our nursing team
- Please **do not** walk into our clinics as the virus is very contagious
- If it is believed you may have measles, our team will provide guidance and direction

### *Measles Vaccine*

There is no cure for measles, however serious illness can be prevented by getting vaccinated with the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Since 1996 two doses of the MMR

vaccine have been routinely given to children in Ontario, with the first dose given at 12 months of age and the second dose given between 4 and 6 years of age.

Adults who have received only one dose of the MMR vaccine can receive a second dose if, they meet the criteria below or based on a discussion with their health provider

- Health care worker
- Post-secondary student
- Planning to travel with measles exposure is a concern

Adults born before 1970 are believed to have some previous exposure to measles and do not need to receive the measles vaccine unless they are traveling. One dose of the MMR vaccine can be given if traveling to areas where measles is a concern.

Please note that due to theoretical risks to the fetus the MMR vaccine **should generally not be given in pregnancy** and pregnancy is not recommended for 4 weeks after receiving the MMR vaccine. The MMR vaccine can be safely given when breastfeeding.

### Traveling Soon?

If you are traveling outside of Canada, it is recommended to make sure you are vaccinated. Below is a table with measles containing vaccine guidelines:

Age Group	Canadian Immunization Guide Advice
Infants (6 months to 11 months)	One dose of MMR **Note: 2 additional doses must be administered on or after 12 months of age for those vaccinated prior to their first birthday to ensure long lasting immunity to measles
Children under 4 years of age who have received one previous dose according to the routine schedule (i.e., on or after 12 months of age)	Administration of the second dose of measles containing vaccine
Individuals born in/after 1970 and 12 months of age and older	2 doses of measles-containing vaccine
Adults born before 1970	1 dose of MMR vaccine Unless there is lab evidence of immunity or history of lab-confirmed measles

**Not sure if you are up to date with measles vaccine?**

If you are unsure if you are up to date with your vaccines, you can call the clinic to ask about your vaccine records and if you should receive a measles vaccine. Our clerical team will either book an appointment with your provider or have a team member call you back.

**Need to book a vaccine appointment?**

If you know you or your child is not up to date with the measles vaccine or any other vaccine, please call to book an appointment with our team. If your child is school-aged, you can also book using Toronto Public Health's School Aged Vaccine Clinics

**To book an appointment for school catchup vaccination:** [Toronto Public Health Appointment Booking System – City of Toronto](#)

For more information about measles and the measles vaccine you can view information from [Toronto Public Health](#).

We are currently doing a review of records for patients between 12 months and 10 years of age and have zero or one measles vaccine. You may be contacted by our team to book an appointment if your child is not up to date with their measles vaccine.

**Information in other languages**

Please see the links below for information from [Our Kids Health](#) about measles in English and other languages:

**English:** [https://www.instagram.com/p/C0RmDE9R938/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C0RmDE9R938/?img_index=1)

**Cantonese:** [https://www.instagram.com/cantonese.kidshealth/p/C0ckBAHPZqN/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/cantonese.kidshealth/p/C0ckBAHPZqN/?img_index=1)

**Spanish:** [https://www.instagram.com/p/C0SPb9EtrIR/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C0SPb9EtrIR/?img_index=1)

**Punjabi:** [https://www.instagram.com/punjabikidshealth/p/C4LrNdMxQ\\_S/](https://www.instagram.com/punjabikidshealth/p/C4LrNdMxQ_S/)

**Tamil:** [https://www.instagram.com/p/C0ijI3XICU1/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/C0ijI3XICU1/?img_index=1)

**Filipino:** <https://www.instagram.com/p/C0UrnV-OSZr/?igsh=MXc0aDc0NG9meHBrMQ==>

**Ukrainian:** <https://www.instagram.com/p/C0R4gZWu9Nt/?igsh=MWtyenV4cDdoaTIOOA==>



Caring hearts. Leading minds.

Talk care and be well,  
SMAFHT Leadership