



## NEWS RELEASE

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## Three Additional Cases of Measles Confirmed in Georgia

### *DPH Urges Georgians to be Vaccinated*

**ATLANTA** - The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) has confirmed three new cases of measles in the metro Atlanta area. The three individuals are all members of one family – none of whom were vaccinated. Although the risk of becoming sick is low, DPH is notifying individuals who may have been exposed to the virus and may be at increased risk for developing measles. Including these three additional cases, the statewide total of measles cases in 2019 is six.

Measles is a highly contagious, serious respiratory disease. It is particularly dangerous for infants who cannot be immunized until they are at least 12 months old and young children who have only received one dose of measles vaccine.

“Measles can be prevented through vaccination,” said Cherie Drenzek, DVM., MS, chief science officer and state epidemiologist, Georgia Department of Public Health. “Keeping immunization levels high is critical to preventing outbreaks or sustained transmission of measles in Georgia. It also provides herd immunity for those who cannot be vaccinated.”

The MMR vaccine is safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.

Measles spreads when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes and respiratory droplets travel through the air. Measles virus can live in the air and on surfaces for two to three hours. Almost everyone who has not been vaccinated will get measles if they are exposed to the virus.

Symptoms of measles include:

- Fever (can be very high)
- Cough, runny nose and red eyes
- Tiny white spots on the inner lining of the cheek – also called Koplik’s spots
- Rash of tiny, red spots that start at the head and spreads to the rest of the body (spots may become joined together as they spread)

People with symptoms of measles should contact their health care provider immediately. **DO NOT** go to the doctor’s office, the hospital, or a public health clinic without **FIRST** calling to let them know about your symptoms. Health care providers who suspect measles in a patient should notify public health immediately.

For more information about measles, log on to <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>.