



Halton Region Public Health
Infectious Disease Control
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville ON L6M 3L1

March 12, 2024

Dear Halton Region Directors of Education,

Media releases were issued by other local Public Health Units regarding investigations of confirmed measles cases within their jurisdiction, including [York Region](#), [Brant County](#), [Toronto Public Health](#) and [Peel Public Health](#). There have been no confirmed cases of measles in Halton Region, however, Halton Region Public Health has followed up with contacts related to these cases. Globally, there is a concerning pattern of measles outbreaks occurring in every region of the world. On February 21, 2024, Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health warned of the potential for more cases to occur in Ontario, especially following any travel during the upcoming March break.

Halton Region Public Health and our school board partners are dedicated to keeping schools open for learning and free from risk of communicable diseases. Cases or potential cases of measles can significantly disrupt school environments due to exclusions of students and staff who are unimmunized or do not have immunization records readily available.

To help mitigate the impact of potential future measles cases in our school settings, we strongly encourage you to have your school board staff and students ensure they have a record of their measles containing vaccine(s) and ensure that other immunizations are also up to date.

In the event of a measles case in the school setting, staff and parents/guardians of students would be contacted to request measles immunization information if it is not already reported to Halton Region's Public Health.

In the event of a case of measles in a school setting, the following **students, staff and volunteers** would be excluded from primary or secondary school for 21 days after their last exposure to the case:

Students

- Anyone between 12 months to less than 18 years of age who does not have documented proof of two doses of measles-containing vaccine.
- Anyone who has not received a measles-containing vaccine despite having a medical or philosophical exemption.

Note: The first dose of measles-containing vaccine must have been given at 12 months of age or older and doses separated by at least four weeks.

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Staff and Volunteers

- Anyone 18 years of age and older born in or after 1970 who does not have documented proof of two doses of measles-containing vaccine **or** who does not have documented proof of immunity through blood work.

Note: Anyone born in 1969 or earlier would not be excluded as they are generally considered immune.

Please encourage parents/guardians to update **student** immunization information that is on file with Halton Region Public Health. Using their provincial health card and yellow immunization record or other official record, parents/guardians can securely and easily update their child's immunization record online using the province's Immunization Connect Ontario (ICON) portal, accessible through [Halton Region's Report Your Immunizations Webpage](#).

Please encourage **staff** to review their immunization record (yellow card or other official record) and ensure they have documented proof of two doses of measles-containing vaccine. Individuals born in or after 1970 who only have one dose of a measles-containing vaccine on file should get a second dose as soon as possible from their regular primary care provider or visit a walk-in clinic if they do not have a primary care provider.

About Measles Infection

Measles virus is easily spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can stay in the air and on surfaces for hours, making it easy to catch.

[Measles](#) symptoms usually include fever, cough, runny nose, red, watery eyes and a rash that starts on the face and spreads over the body and can cause serious illness and death.

Appropriate testing for measles includes urine test and a nasal or throat swab. Blood tests are helpful but not sufficient to diagnose measles. Even individuals who are up to date with the measles vaccine should still watch for symptoms of measles for 21 days after exposure.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and collaboration in keeping our school communities safe.

Yours in Health,

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