

March 18, 2025

Summary

Public Health – Seattle & King County and Snohomish County Health Department are investigating a positive case of measles, identified on March 17, 2025, in an adult resident of Snohomish County. There is no risk of measles to the general public from this new case.

Public Health – Seattle & King County and Snohomish County Health Department are investigating a positive case of measles, identified on March 17, 2025, in an adult resident of Snohomish County. This case is linked to [the first measles case identified in late February in King County < https://publichealthinsider.com/2025/02/27/first-measles-case-of-2025-in-washington-state-identified-in-a-king-county-infant/>](https://publichealthinsider.com/2025/02/27/first-measles-case-of-2025-in-washington-state-identified-in-a-king-county-infant/). This new case was likely exposed at a location where the previous case had visited while contagious.

King and Snohomish County health departments assessed any potential public exposures while the individual was contagious and determined that there is no risk of measles to the general public from this new case.

Fortunately, the measles vaccine is very effective. Two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine provides about 97% protection against getting infected by measles and that protection lasts a lifetime.

"Measles spreads easily in communities with low immunity, which is why maintaining high vaccination rates is so critical," said Dr. James Lewis, Health Officer for the Snohomish County Health Department. "We have confirmed a second measles case; without the rapid response from public health departments to conduct contact tracing to identify susceptible individuals, we could have seen significantly more cases. While there are some prevention steps like immune globulin and the MMR vaccine that can prevent infection when given promptly after exposure, supplements like vitamin A, cod liver oil, or other alternative remedies will not stop measles from spreading. Measles exposure in the community puts vulnerable people—especially infants, pregnant individuals, and those with weakened immune systems—at serious risk. Measles is highly contagious, but also highly preventable with vaccination, and ensuring people are fully immunized remains our best defense."

"Measles is more than just a rash and can be a very serious infection that affects different parts of the body. It's hard to watch a loved one experience an illness due to measles," said Dr. Eric Chow, Communicable Disease Chief for Public Health – Seattle & King County.

"Unfortunately, measles is very contagious and people who are not fully vaccinated are at risk. Talk to your doctor about checking your vaccination status. By getting up to date with the MMR vaccine, we protect ourselves and our loved ones from infection."

About measles

Measles is a highly contagious and potentially severe disease that causes fever, rash, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. If one person has it, up to 9 out of 10 people nearby will become infected if they are not protected. It mainly spreads through the air after a person with measles coughs or sneezes.

Measles symptoms begin 7 to 21 days after exposure. Measles is contagious from about 4 days before the rash appears through 4 days after the rash appears. People can spread measles before they have the characteristic measles rash.

Measles can lead to ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, and rarely, encephalitis (brain inflammation) or death.

Complications from measles can happen even in healthy people, but those at highest risk include: infants and children under 5 years, adults over 20 years, pregnant people, and people with weakened immune systems from medications or underlying disease.

Measles is preventable with the safe and highly effective measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), two doses of the MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles and that protection is long lasting.

For more information about measles and measles vaccination, including where to get measles vaccinations: [kingcounty.gov/measles < en/dept/dph/health-safety/disease-illness/measles>](https://kingcounty.gov/measles/en/dept/dph/health-safety/disease-illness/measles)