



**COUNTY OF BERGEN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

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James J. Tedesco, III
County Executive

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Director/Health Officer

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Dear Parents,

From January 1 to January 30, 2015, 102 people from 14 states were reported to have measles. Most of these cases are part of a large, ongoing multi-state outbreak linked to an amusement park in California.

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. It spreads through the air through coughing and sneezing. Measles starts with a fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and sore throat, and is followed by a rash that spreads all over the body. About three out of 10 people who get measles will develop one or more complications. Complications include diarrhea, pneumonia (the most common cause of death in young children), or ear infections (which can result in permanent hearing loss). Complications can be serious in all age groups. However, children younger than 5 years of age and adults older than 20 years are more likely to suffer from measles complications. Measles may also cause pregnant woman to give birth prematurely, or have a low birth weight baby.

Bergen County Department of Health Services would like to take this opportunity to provide education and prevention materials related to this current measles outbreak. Here are some tips we can all follow to help us and our children stay healthy:

- Get vaccinated. The Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) shot is very safe, and it is effective at preventing measles (as well as mumps and rubella). Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. But most children who get the MMR shot have no side effects.
- Be aware of and review your facility's illness policy regarding those children not vaccinated with the MMR vaccine (due to religious or medical reasons) who may be subject to exclusion from school should a case of measles be suspect within the facility's population.

You can learn more about measles by logging on to the Bergen County Department of Health Services website at www.bergenhealth.org or by calling 201-634-2600 and asking to speak to a Public Health Professional regarding Measles. If you have specific questions or concerns about your child's health, please contact your healthcare provider.

Respectfully,

Nancy Mangieri, Health Officer