

Licking Valley Local School District

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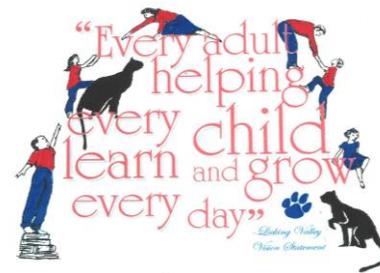
www.edline.net/pages/licking_valley_local_sd

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May 7, 2014

Dear Parents,

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH); multiple Ohio county health departments and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are investigating an outbreak of measles that is occurring in several counties in Ohio. At this time there are no reported cases in Licking County, but there have been cases in neighboring Knox County. This letter will provide information to assist parents in understanding measles to help ensure the safety and health of all students and staff.

It is recommended that children who are not up to date with their measles-mumps-rubella vaccine (MMR) be vaccinated, if there is no medical contraindication. If your child is not vaccinated, and a case of measles occurs in the school, your child will be excluded until 21 days after the rash onset in the last case of measles.

What causes measles?

Measles is caused by a virus.

How does measles spread?

Measles is spread from person to person through the air by infectious droplets; **it is highly contagious.**

What are the symptoms of measles?

The first symptom is usually a fever. Other symptoms are runny nose, cough, loss of appetite, conjunctivitis (redness and swelling of the mucous membrane that lines the eyelids and eye surface) and a rash. The rash usually lasts 5-6 days and begins at the hairline, moves to the face and upper neck, and proceeds down the body.

How serious is measles?

Measles can be a serious disease, with 30% of reported cases experiencing one or more complications. Death from measles occurs in 2 to 3 per 1,000 cases in the United States

What are the potential complications of measles?

Diarrhea is the most common complication of measles. Pneumonia and acute encephalitis are other serious complications. Acute encephalitis (an inflammation of the brain), is a serious complication that can lead to permanent brain damage. Approximately one out of one thousand infected persons will develop encephalitis

How long is a person with measles contagious?

Measles is highly contagious and can be transmitted from four days before the rash becomes visible to four days after the rash appears.

What should be done if someone is exposed to measles?

Notification of the exposure should be communicated to a health care provider and the local health department.

*Acceptable presumptive evidence of immunity to measles includes:

- Documentation of age-appropriate vaccination with live measles virus containing vaccine:
 - Pre-school aged children: one dose
 - School aged children in grades K-12: two doses
 - Adults not at high risk: one dose
- Laboratory evidence of immunity (Measles IgG)
- Laboratory confirmation of disease
- Born before 1957

*The Ohio Department of health recommends the following immunization guidelines:

- 1) Anyone born prior to 1957 is assumed to be immune due to disease.
- 2) Anyone born between 1957-1986 should have had one dose of MMR and if they wish can get a second dose.
- 3) Anyone born from 1986-present should have had two doses and if they haven't should get them.

For additional information about measles, visit the Ohio Department of Health website at www.odh.ohio.gov or the CDC website at www.cdc.gov or contact the district nurse with any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

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