
*"To improve the health of our communities by identifying sustainable solutions to community health issues,
developing partnerships for implementation of strategies, and demonstrating our success through measurement of outcomes."*

Public Health Advisory for Health District Four
(Ada, Boise, Elmore and Valley Counties)

Medical Evaluation of Special Olympics Athletes and Their Families

February 5, 2009

Circulate to All Medical Providers & Clinical Staff

One of the most important public health threats associated with an event such as the Winter Special Olympics is the potential for importation and person-to-person spread of measles. In the past, similar sporting events featuring foreign athletes and visitors have led to measles outbreaks. Healthcare providers should consider the diagnosis of measles in any person with clinically compatible illness.

Measles should be considered in persons presenting with a maculopapular rash, especially if fever or cough, a stuffy or runny nose, or conjunctivitis are present. Healthcare providers that suspect measles should test a single serum specimen for IgM—the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories can provide rapid IgM testing.

Healthcare providers that suspect measles or any other notifiable diseases that require reporting of the condition immediately or within 1 business day should immediately notify the Southwest District Health Department, Central District Health Department, or South Central Public Health District, or contact the state health department at 334-5939 or 1-800-632-8000 after-hours or on weekends.

Measles is a highly infectious viral respiratory illness not commonly transmitted in the United States because of an effective vaccine program. However, some individuals in our community or visitors from other countries might be especially susceptible to measles infection. Those persons who are unvaccinated or have previously received only one dose of measles vaccine are at an elevated risk for measles infection if exposed. Even persons born before 1957 might be susceptible to measles infection. In addition, while receiving two doses of measles vaccine is 99% effective, cases in appropriately vaccinated individuals previously occurred during a measles outbreak associated with a sporting event.

The onset of fever may occur 7–18 days after exposure, with a maculopapular rash occurring approximately 14 days after exposure. Ill persons spread measles through infected respiratory droplets and are contagious 4 days before the onset of rash until 4 days after the onset of rash.

For more information about measles, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/surv-manual/chpt07-measles.htm#1> and <http://www.vaccineinformation.org/measles/photos.asp>. Also, please reference the Idaho Reportable Diseases List at <http://www.epi.idaho.gov>.