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CARING FOR NEW MEXICO

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NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Secretary Catherine Torres, MD

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Department of Health Investigating a Patient with Measles in Lincoln County *People Urged to Keep Immunizations Up-To-Date*

(Santa Fe) -- The New Mexico Department of Health is investigating a laboratory-confirmed case of the measles in an infant male from Lincoln County. The child's exposure is unknown.

Measles is highly contagious and can be transmitted through the air. Early symptoms of measles include red eyes, fever, runny nose and cough. Within a few days following the cough and runny nose, a rash will typically begin on the head and spread down the body. Measles is diagnosed by a combination of symptoms and laboratory testing.

"The Department of Health is working closely with the family to identify anyone that may have been exposed to the disease so we can prevent more cases," said Department of Health Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Catherine Torres. "In general, the best way to prevent measles is to be vaccinated against measles."

The Department of Health recommends that anyone not sure of their vaccination status or persons traveling outside of the country should check to be sure that they are current on all immunizations including the measles vaccination.

Vaccines are free for any child in New Mexico, regardless of insurance status, under the Vaccines for Children program. Children without insurance coverage can get the vaccine at their local public health office. Public health office contact information can be found in the blue pages of the phonebook or online at www.nmhealth.org. Adults needing the measles vaccine can contact their medical provider or Nurse Advice New Mexico at 1-877-725-2552.

If you think you may have been exposed to measles or have measles, please call your health care provider first to make arrangements to be seen without exposing other patients to the virus. Your provider may ask you to stay in your vehicle in order to prevent waiting room exposures. Infants under one year of age, pregnant women, or immunocompromised individuals who were exposed to the measles patient may need to receive other medications to protect them.



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This is the third measles case in New Mexico in 2011. Medical providers should report suspect cases of measles to the Department of Health's Epidemiology and Response Division at (505) 827-0006.

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