

Pembroke Regional Hospital

MEMO

To: All Staff and Physicians
From: Infection, Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Occ Health
Date: April 8, 2024
Subject: Measles

As you are likely aware, measles is a serious respiratory infection that is highly contagious. Since 2023, there has been a global increase in measles activity, with 9 laboratory confirmed cases of measles already reported in Ontario in 2024 and 38 in Quebec.

Because measles is an extremely contagious disease, instances of exposure to those infected can carry considerable risks. Following exposure, there is a critical need to promptly identify individuals susceptible to measles and offer preventive management and care. As a result, it is imperative that our Occ Health team has a complete and up-to-date record of immune status for all health care workers.

Health care workers can demonstrate immunity to measles by providing either laboratory evidence of immunity or documented evidence of two complete doses of the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine received on or after their first birthday. While the measles vaccination is not mandatory at PRH, it is strongly recommended given that immunization is the best way to protect yourself against this virus.

Based on the year that you were born, you may have only received one dose of the measles vaccine as a child. However, because health care workers are considered at high-risk of exposure, two doses of the MMR vaccine are recommended regardless of the year that you were born.

Those who are unsure of their immune status or who cannot obtain their vaccination record are encouraged to receive the MMR vaccine as there is no harm in giving the measles-containing vaccine to an individual who is already immune.

It is important to note that there are some contraindications to the MMR vaccine, including pregnancy and those who are considering pregnancy within the next 28 days. It is important to speak with your health care provider or a member of our Occ Health team if you have questions.

In the coming weeks, our Occ Health team will be reaching out to those staff who do not have a record of immune status on file. This is a key step in our preparedness for potential measles cases at PRH. Immunization records can be found through the Renfrew County and District

Health Unit, your family physician's office, in your childhood immunization booklet, or through other employers in the healthcare setting.

As health care providers, we must also be aware of the signs and symptoms of measles in our patients. If you suspect the measles infection in a patient presenting to you:

- Provide them with a medical mask (if able to tolerate and no contraindications)
- Promptly isolate the patient in a negative pressure room with the door closed (if available). If that is not available, place the patient in a single room with the door closed.
- All suspect and confirmed cases of measles must be placed on Airborne isolation precautions.

All health care workers must wear a fit-tested and seal checked N95 respirator when providing care to a patient with suspect or confirmed measles. Prompt identification and isolation of suspect cases will help avoid transmission and protect the health and safety of our staff and patients.

If you have questions about your immune status, would like to review or discuss your immunization status, or book a vaccination appointment, please contact a member of our Occ Health team at extension 7202 or by email at OccHealth@prh.email.

For more information about Immunization Clinics available within Renfrew County, visit <https://www.rcdhu.com/clinics-classes/immunization-clinics/>