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Media briefing on first measles case confirmed in Contra Costa County *BART riders may have been exposed*

Media Briefing will be held today at:

11:15 a.m. Wednesday, February 11, 2015

30 Muir Road, ZA Room, Martinez

No interviews will be provided before the briefing

Some BART riders may have been exposed to measles last week after a Contra Costa County resident with measles commuted from home to work in San Francisco while infectious. Although the risk of contracting measles by being exposed on BART is low, Bay Area residents should be aware of the situation.

Contra Costa Public Health officials confirmed this week the county's first measles case since the statewide outbreak began in December and issued an advisory today after learning the person traveled on BART before being diagnosed. Most people are not at risk since they are vaccinated against measles, but anyone who is not vaccinated is at risk to be infected if exposed to the virus.

The person traveled between the Lafayette Station and Montgomery station in San Francisco during the morning and evening commutes from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February 4-6. Contra Costa Public Health and the San Francisco Department of Public Health are working together on investigating the person's movements and notifying people who were in close contact. The person's employer is cooperating fully with the San Francisco Health Department to ensure the safety of any employees who may have been exposed.

The person also spent time at the E & O Kitchen and Bar (314 Sutter Street in San Francisco) on Wednesday evening, February 4th. Patrons who visited this restaurant between 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. may have been exposed to measles. E & O is fully cooperating with the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

People who are vaccinated or have had measles before are extremely unlikely to catch measles, even if they had contact with a contagious person. However, those who were not previously vaccinated are at high risk if exposed. Measles is a serious, highly contagious disease that is spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Because the measles virus can stay in the air for up to two hours and BART cars circulate throughout the Bay Area, anyone who used the transit system during that time could have potentially exposed to the virus. Health officials urge anyone who shows symptoms of measles to contact their healthcare provider immediately.

"Measles is circulating in the Bay Area and we don't know yet where this person was exposed," said Erika Janssen, Communicable Disease Program Chief with Contra Costa Public Health. "The ongoing measles outbreak in California highlights the need for people to be vaccinated, and this is just another example of how interconnected our region is and how important it is for everyone to be up to date on their immunizations."

People born before 1957 are considered immune as they likely had measles as children and developed immunity from the disease. Adults born after 1957 should review their vaccination records to ensure they have received the MMR vaccine or talk to their regular healthcare provider for questions about immunization status. Pregnant women and people who are HIV positive or immune suppressed are considered to be at high risk for measles if they are not vaccinated.

"The measles vaccine is very effective and is a standard part of pediatric primary care," said Dr. Tomas Aragon, San Francisco Health Officer. "While we are concerned about the current outbreak in California and its potential to spread, we cannot emphasize enough that the solution is simple and available: be vaccinated."

Measles symptoms can begin one to three weeks after exposure and include high fever, runny nose, coughing and watery red eyes. A rash develops on the face and neck two to three days after the fever begins, and spreads down the body. The rash usually lasts five or six days. An infected person is contagious for several days before and after the rash appears.

For more information about measles, visit Contra Costa Public Health: cchealth.org/measles or SFDPH: <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/default.asp>. Contra Costa County residents can also call 925-313-6740. Additional information also is available on the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html> or for California Department of Public Health (CDPH) outbreak information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/>

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