

# Preparing and Responding to Measles:

## Checklist for Summer Camps

### Why Should Summer Camps Prepare for Measles?



Measles is a highly contagious disease caused by a virus and spreads easily when someone with measles breathes, coughs, or sneezes. It can also spread if people touch surfaces or items with the virus on them. **Measles is more than just a rash** – it can cause severe disease or even death. About 1 in 5 people who get measles will be hospitalized.



**Campers and staff spend a lot of time together in close contact, which makes it easy for the virus to quickly spread from person to person.** The best protection is 2 doses of the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine which is about 97% effective at preventing measles.

## Prepare for Measles Before Summer Camp Opens:

- **Call the Boston Public Health Commission at (617)-534-5611 or Massachusetts Department of Public Health at (617)-983-6800** for assistance when measles is suspected in a camper, staff member, or volunteer.
- **Review Massachusetts regulations** on public-health related [camp requirements](#).
- **Communicate applicable state, local, and/or camp vaccine requirements** to campers, staff, and volunteers before camp begins. The best way to prevent the spread of measles is to ensure that all campers, staff, and volunteers are vaccinated or are immune to measles.
- **Maintain documentation of measles immunity status for all campers, staff, and volunteers**, including any with medical or other exemptions from vaccination. This information will help the health department identify people who may need extra care. See [sample documentation template](#).
- **Make sure you have a supply of facemasks** to give to a person with measles symptoms.
- **Be watchful for campers, staff, and volunteers who may come to camp with fever and other signs and symptoms of measles:**
  - First, high fever with cough, runny nose, and red eyes.
  - Later, people may get white spots in their mouth and a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the body.
- **Identify an isolation space** where a camper with measles symptoms can wait for a caregiver to pick them up to help prevent others from getting sick.
  - Choose a separate room (not shared with anyone else) with a door that can close and a window that can open to the outdoors, ideally with access to a separate bathroom.
  - **Remind staff and caregivers** that people should stay at home when they are sick.



# Responding to Measles in Summer Camps

## Immediate Actions: What to do in the first 10 minutes after measles is suspected



When a camper, staff member, or volunteer has measles symptoms, take these actions **IMMEDIATELY**:

- ☐ **Give the person a facemask** (if 2 years old or older). Facemasks should be well-fitting and cover their mouth and nose to limit the spread of respiratory secretions.
- ☐ **Isolate the person with measles symptoms to protect others from exposure**
  - **For Campers:** Move them to the camp's isolation area, keep the door closed and the window open, and call a caregiver to pick them up.
  - **For Adults:** Ask them to go home right away. If they can't leave immediately, have them wait in the isolation area until they can be picked up.
  - **Medical Care:** Recommend the sick person see a doctor as soon as possible.
  - **Safety Tip:** Only staff or volunteers who are immune to measles should monitor someone in isolation.
  - **After They Leave:** Keep the isolation room empty for 2 hours, then clean and disinfect it using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) for hepatitis B or HIV (these are also effective against the measles virus).
- ☐ **Call the Boston Public Health Commission** (617-534-5611) **and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health** (617-983-6800). They will guide you on isolation, testing, medical care, and safe transport if needed.
- ☐ **Seek emergency care** if the person who is sick gets rapidly worse or if they experience trouble breathing, pain when breathing or coughing, dehydration, a fever or headache that won't stop, confusion, decreased alertness or severe weakness, blue color around the mouth, or low energy. **Call the healthcare facility before you arrive to let them know you are concerned about measles.**

## ADDITIONAL ACTIONS AFTER ISOLATION

Be prepared to work with your health department on the following actions, based on their recommendations:

- **Make a list of people who might have been exposed to the person with suspected measles.** The health department may recommend that campers, staff, and volunteers who are not immune to measles should be excluded from camp to protect their health and prevent further spread. The health department may also offer them post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent infection after exposure.
- **Inform caregivers** that someone at their child's camp has had measles symptoms, and let them know if their child has been exposed. Ask them to watch for measles symptoms in their children and other household members for 21 days (even if they are immune). See [sample notification templates](#). The Boston Public Health Commission can also assist with these communications.
- Ask staff and volunteers to **watch for measles symptoms in themselves and campers for 21 days.**

## Resources:

### Boston Public Health Commission

✧ [Boston.gov/Measles](https://www.boston.gov/measles) ☎ 617-534-5611

### MA Department of Public Health

✧ [Mass.gov/Info-Details/Measles](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/measles)

☎ 617-983-6800

