

January 31, 2025

On January 29th 2025, Southwestern Public Health and Grand Erie Public Health declared **measles** outbreaks, after 19 patients, mostly children, became ill in recent weeks. Two patients presented at two different hospitals in southwestern Ontario, including one at Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and another at the Woodstock Hospital emergency room. There have been 16 measles cases including 13 children and 3 adults in the Haldimand-Norfolk area and Brantford.

HPPH is recommending continued heightened surveillance, and efforts to ensure your clients are up-to-date on measles immunization.

As cases of measles have started circulating in our surrounding counties recently, please ensure you are on alert and prepared for a possible measles case to present to your practice.

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IPAC guidance

All healthcare workers, regardless of presumptive immunity to measles, should wear a fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirator when providing care to a patient with suspect or confirmed measles.

Resources:

[Interim IPAC Recommendations and Use of PPE for Care of Individuals with Suspect or Confirmed](#)

[Measles](#) |Public Health Ontario (March 2024)

[Measles Information for Health Care Providers](#) |Public Health Ontario (September 2024).

[Measles IPAC Checklist for Clinics and Specimen Collection Centres](#) |Public Health Ontario (September 2024).

Current measles vaccine recommendations

Age range	MMR Vaccine Recommendations
<p>Infants and young children NOT travelling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive one dose of MMR vaccine on or after child's first birthday. • Receive MMRV as second dose at ages 4-6 years. • When possible, receive the MMRV second dose closer to age 4 than age 6.
<p>Infants and young children travelling outside of Canada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MMR vaccine can be received early at 6 -11 months of age. Two additional doses of measles containing vaccine are still required after the first birthday. • Preschoolers: Consider receiving the second dose of MMR vaccine earlier than age 4-6 years. • Receive measles vaccine at least two weeks before travel.
<p>Person born before 1970 in Canada</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally considered to have natural immunity since measles circulated in Canada before 1970. Some of these individuals may be susceptible. • If a person is unsure of status, provide one dose of MMR. • Those planning to travel outside of Canada are eligible to receive 1 dose of MMR vaccine (total).
<p>Person born 1970 or later</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If person is unsure of status, provide two doses of MMR vaccine at least 28 days apart. • If a person has only had one dose of MMR vaccine, give the second dose of MMR vaccine at least 28 days after the first dose. • If client had two-doses of MMR vaccine, consider fully immunized – no serology required.

<p>Health care workers, post- secondary students, and military personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible to receive 2 doses of MMR
<p>All others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Ontarians, regardless of age, are eligible for two publicly funded doses of measles-containing vaccine based on a health care provider’s clinical judgment and needs of the patient (eg. health care worker, post- secondary student, planning to travel where measles is circulating). • Note: Vaccination over serology is generally preferred.

Healthcare providers are requested to actively review patient records and prioritize the following children for MMR/MMRV immunizations:

- Children who are one year and older and have not received their first dose of MMR
- Children who are 4 years of age and older and have not yet received their MMRV dose (encourage them to receive it closer to 4 years and not delay until 6 years).

Please do not refer patients to HPPH for MMR vaccinations – we do not have capacity to provide immunizations to rostered patients. At this time, we can only provide MMR vaccinations to those without a primary care provider.

Testing for measles

Virus isolation: NP swab, aspirate or throat swab obtained within 7 days after onset of rash using viral transport media **AND** 50 mL of clean catch urine within 14 days after onset of rash. Must be stored and shipped cold.

Acute serology: IgM and IgG obtained at first visit, optimally by day 3 and within 7 days after rash onset

AND

Convalescent serology: Unless swab(s) and/or urine confirm acute measles, and/or unless initial serology is definitely diagnostic, a second sample of blood 7-10 days or more after onset of rash (but not earlier than 5 days after first sample) should be collected.

***Ensure PCR swab and urine are the first steps in diagnostic testing. Serology may not be helpful in the acute diagnosis or management of suspect measles. Diagnosis may not be confirmed until after receipt of convalescent serology results, which highlights the importance of the direct tests of respiratory and urine samples.**

The table below is a useful guideline for measles specimen collection:

Specimen Type	Collection Timing	Collection Kit	Collection Requisition on Lab Requisition Form
Nasopharyngeal swab/aspirate or throat swab	Within 7 days of rash onset	Universal transport medium (UTM) collection kit (pink medium)	Request "Nasopharyngeal, Measles Virus Detection" or "Throat, Measles Virus Detection", including symptoms and onset date
Clean catch urine 50mL	Within 14 days of rash onset	Sterile container	Request "Urine, Measles Virus Detection", including symptoms and onset date
Acute blood specimen 5mL	Within 7 days of rash onset	Blood, clotted – vacutainer tubes (SST)	Request "Blood, Acute Measles IgG/IgM Diagnosis", including symptoms and onset date
Convalescent blood specimen 5mL	7-10 days after the acute; preferably 10-30 days after acute	Blood, clotted – vacutainer tubes (SST)	Request "Blood, Convalescent Measles IgG/IgM Diagnosis", including symptoms and onset date

Virus respiratory kits and virus culture kits are acceptable to use for measles testing. These kits contain transport media swabs. Please ensure you have transport media swabs in stock and that they are not expired.

Public Health Ontario weekly surveillance

Public Health Ontario (PHO) has released the first surveillance report of 2025 on measles. The report is updated monthly and is accessible through PHO homepage or directly [here](#). Additionally, resources are available on the updated PHO Measles landing [page](#).

Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella fact sheet and poster

The HPPH Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella (MMRV) fact sheet and poster that was provided to you last year is still current. When testing for MMRV, ensure all indicated lab tests are completed to confirm diagnosis. The fact sheet is attached. If you require a printed copy, please contact HPPH infectious disease team IDteam@hpph.ca or 1-888-221-2133 ext. 3284.