

Important Measles Update for Children Summer Camps

Friday, May 2, 2025

To Operators and Staff,

Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) would like to draw your attention to a public health matter that will impact your camp planning this summer. Campers and staff will need to be aware of additional requirements regarding measles. **Specifically, all campers and staff need to come to camp with their own up-to-date measles immunity information readily available.** We are providing this initial communication to inform early planning; more detailed guidance may follow.

Ontario is currently experiencing a large measles outbreak. Measles activity is anticipated to continue into the summer months.

As of April 29, Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) has identified 142 confirmed cases of measles in Huron and Perth. Measles can spread easily in group settings such as camps.

Measles is a highly contagious infectious disease

Measles is an airborne virus and can linger in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours. Symptoms often start with a fever, cough, runny nose, and/or red eyes (often watery). A red blotchy rash will appear three to seven days after the start of the symptoms, first on the face and then spreading down to the rest of the body. Individuals are infectious from four days before rash begins, until four days after.

Most people fully recover from measles within two to three weeks. Sometimes measles can cause complications, such as pneumonia, ear infections, diarrhea, hearing loss, brain swelling (encephalitis), seizures, or, rarely, even death.

The best way to protect against measles is through vaccination

The best way to protect against measles is vaccination. Two doses of measles-containing vaccine (such as the Measles Mumps Rubella vaccine or the Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella vaccine) is over 97% effective in preventing a measles infection.

It is recommended that all camp staff check their immunization records to ensure protection against the measles virus. If you are born after 1970 and do not have two doses of measles-containing vaccine, book an appointment with your healthcare provider to assess your immunity and bring your immunizations up to date.

In the event of a case, exposure or outbreak at your camp

We want you to be aware that, if there is a case, exposure, or outbreak at your camp, individuals in the camp (including counsellors, kitchen staff, custodial staff and children) may be required to self-isolate. Most camp settings will not be able to offer self-isolation on site, and therefore the following individuals will be excluded from attending the camp:

- individuals who are symptomatic cases AND
- exposed persons who **do not** have immunity, which means:
 - they are not up to date with their measles immunizations, OR
 - they do not have proof of measles immunity (bloodwork showing antibodies to measles), OR
 - they do not have proof of previous measles infection (such as healthcare provider attestation)

Campers and staff who have a valid medical contra-indication to measles vaccine will also be excluded. This is to protect the non-immune individuals from health risks associated with a measles exposure. HPPH will work with camp operators should there be a measles case, exposure or outbreak.

Given the current measles outbreak in Ontario, camp operators should create a plan that includes the following measures:

- A communication to all campers and staff that they are strongly advised to be up to date on their measles vaccinations, and that they are required to be able to readily provide proof of immunity to Huron Perth Public Health. Campers' families should be made aware that campers who develop measles or who are exposed and cannot provide proof of immunity will be excluded. Ideally, families should be made aware of this information at the time of booking or as soon as possible after booking to ensure parents understand the process and have time to prepare.
- A process to recognize measles symptoms early, to promptly isolate symptomatic persons and to promptly report to public health. Reports to public health can be made by contacting the HPPH infectious disease team at 1-888-221-2133 ext. 3284.

As always, advise families that ill campers are not to attend camp. Also, campers cannot attend camp if they have been exposed to measles and have been directed to self-isolate.

HPPH measles information/support

If you have any questions about preparing your camp this summer with regards to measles, you may contact the HPPH infectious disease team at 1-888-221-2133 ext. 3284.

Other resources/supports include:

- [Measles – Huron Perth Public Health](#)
- [Measles: What you should know \(factsheet\) – Health Canada](#)
- [About Measles – Ministry of Health](#)
- [811 \(24-7 health service\) – Ministry of Health](#)