

NEWS RELEASE

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Four New Measles Cases Confirmed in North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Region

NORTH BAY, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) has confirmed four additional cases of measles, bringing the region total to five as of March 19. All newly infected individuals are close contacts of the original case announced earlier this month and are not fully vaccinated against measles. They are currently self-isolating.

“At this time, there is no evidence of the virus spreading throughout the region and no locations have been identified where the public could have been exposed,” says Dr. Carol Zimbalatti, Medical Officer of Health. “We continue to be in regular communication with the individuals and their close contacts to help keep our local risk level low, and we appreciate how closely public health isolation recommendations have been followed by these individuals.”

Measles is a highly contagious virus that spreads through the air and can remain in the air or on surfaces for up to two hours after an infected person has left the area. Individuals can reduce their risk by avoiding travel to high-risk areas and getting up-to-date with their measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine.

“Two doses are recommended for individuals born in or after 1970. Most individuals born before 1970 have immunity from exposure in their childhood,” says Dr. Zimbalatti.

Symptoms of measles can begin seven to 21 days after exposure and include runny nose, watery red eyes, cough, fever, and a rash spreading from the face to the rest of the body. Long-term and more severe complications of measles can include vision or hearing loss, a brain or ear infection, pneumonia, an early birth (if pregnant), or in rare cases, death. Individuals who are pregnant, under the age of five, immunocompromised, or not fully vaccinated against measles are most at risk of severe outcomes.

The Health Unit will issue further communication if there is an increased risk to the public. Individuals can stay up-to-date with the local situation and check their immunization record at myhealthunit.ca/measles. Those looking to get up to date with their MMR vaccine are asked to contact their healthcare provider, or the Health Unit at 1-800-563-2808 Ext. 5252.

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