**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Connecticut Department of Public Health
January 28, 2019 Contact: Elizabeth Conklin (860) 509-7270

**DPH: Case of Measles Confirmed in Connecticut**Hartford – The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced that it has confirmed a case of measles in a New Haven County adult, the first confirmed case this year in the state; three cases were confirmed during 2018. DPH is collaborating with local partners to identify contacts and implement appropriate control measures.

Measles is a highly contagious disease that can spread quickly among unvaccinated people. However, the majority of people exposed to measles are not at-risk of developing the disease since most people have either been vaccinated or have had measles in the past, before vaccination became routine.

“Cases of measles, while not widespread in the United States, are not uncommon and measles is circulating in the United States and internationally. Currently there are ongoing measles outbreaks in the United States in New York and the Pacific Northwest. The single best way to protect yourself and your children from measles is to be vaccinated,” said DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino. “While most people have had the measles vaccination, it’s important to know your vaccination status and to be aware of the signs and symptoms of measles so you can get medical attention.”

The measles vaccine is very effective. One dose of measles vaccine is about 93% effective at preventing measles if exposed to the virus. Two doses are about 97% effective. Very few people—about three out of 100—who get two doses of measles vaccine will still get measles if exposed to the virus. Measles vaccine does not cause measles illness.

Most Connecticut residents have been vaccinated. Vaccination with 2 doses of MMR is required to attend schools and colleges in Connecticut, however, students with medical or religious exemptions may attend school without being vaccinated. According to the 2016-2017 Statewide School Immunization Survey, 97% of Connecticut students were vaccinated with 2 doses of MMR by kindergarten entry. Exposed individuals who are not vaccinated against measles must stay out of school, or other high risk settings, for a full 21 days after their last known exposure.

CDC recommends all children get two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12- through 15-months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age.

Adults should have at least one dose of MMR vaccine. Certain groups need two doses of MMR, including: college students, health care workers, international travelers, and persons at high risk for measles complications. Adults born in the U.S. before 1957 are considered immune to measles from past exposures, but in situations where exposure to measles is likely, these adults may benefit from a dose of MMR vaccine to be safer. Individuals who are unsure of their vaccination status are encouraged to check with their physician.

International travelers should be up-to-date on their vaccinations. Most cases of measles are acquired or linked to international travel. Most people who are diagnosed as having measles are not vaccinated or did not know their vaccination status.

“Many countries throughout the world either do not place a priority on or do not have access to vaccinations, so as people from the United States travel abroad, especially individuals who have not been vaccinated, the likelihood of bringing the disease back here and exposing people at home increases. Vaccination is critical to protect yourself from getting measles and spreading your infection to others,” added Dr. Pino.

Symptoms of measles generally begin 7-21 days (typically 14-16 days) after a person is exposed to an infected person. A typical case of measles begins with mild to moderate fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes (conjunctivitis), and sore throat. Three to five days after the start of these symptoms, a red or reddish-brown rash appears, usually starting on a person’s face at the hairline and spreading downward to the entire body. At the time the rash appears, a person’s fever may spike to more than 104 degrees Fahrenheit.

The rash typically lasts at least a few days and then disappears in the same order. People with measles may be contagious up to 4 days before the rash appears and for four days after the day the rash appears.

Measles is very easily spread from person to person. If you have a fever and a rash and you think you might have measles, you should avoid public settings and telephone your healthcare provider BEFORE going directly to a healthcare facility so steps can be taken to avoid possibly exposing others.

For more information about measles, please visit [www.cdc.gov/measles](http://www.cdc.gov/measles).

Click [here](https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Immunizations/Case-Occurrence-of-Selected-Diseases-Connecticut) for information on the annual numbers of vaccine preventable disease cases in Connecticut
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