Measles Information Update April 26, 2019

You may be aware that there has been a marked increase in cases of measles both here in our region as well as elsewhere in the nation.

We urge you to protect your health and the health of those around you by making sure your measles vaccination is up to date. College-age students who do not have evidence of immunity need two doses of the measles (MMR) vaccine, separated by at least 28 days. Adults who do not have evidence of immunity should receive at least one dose of the MMR vaccine. Additional information on measles and the MMR vaccine is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

CSULB students who are unsure of their vaccination status may visit Student Health Services to take a free test to determine their vaccination status. If required, students may receive the vaccine itself also at no cost.

It is important for faculty and staff to be vaccinated as well. If you are a faculty or staff member, please contact your medical provider as soon as possible to determine your vaccination status or to get vaccinated.

We strongly encourage all CSULB students, faculty, and staff to ensure that they are properly immunized against measles for the safety and well-being of our campus community.

Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by a virus, and it is transmitted by the airborne spread of respiratory droplets – often through coughing, sneezing or speaking. If you become ill and suspect that you may have measles, please do not come to campus. Seek medical assistance immediately. Call your medical provider immediately and let them know that you suspect you have measles, so that they are prepared when you arrive for your appointment. If you go to urgent care, please notify them in advance as well. Stay home unless you are going to your medical appointment.

**Symptoms**

Measles symptoms usually begin 10-12 days (up to 21 days) after exposure, including:

- A high fever, over 101°F, which precedes a rash and persists after.
- White spots may appear in the mouth in the early stages.
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Rash that starts on the face or hairline and spreads downward toward neck, trunk, arms, legs and feet.
- The disease is often described by patients as leaving them “feeling miserable,” and children seem to suffer most.
Some people who have been previously vaccinated for measles can be infected if their vaccine is no longer providing immunity. The rash would be less intense and not spread to the entire body. The symptoms are also milder.

Transmission

Measles patients are typically contagious from 4 days before and 4 days after the rash onset. Measles can spread from person-to-person through coughing and sneezing. Measles virus can live in the air for two hours or more after an infected person coughs or sneezes. People can then become infected by breathing in the contaminated air. Measles is extremely contagious. Up to 90% of people who are not immune will become infected after having contact with an infected person. Because of the infectious nature of this disease, please contact your healthcare provider by phone – immediately – if you or someone you know has been exposed to or has measles. Do not enter any healthcare or other public facility unless instructed to do so by a medical professional.

Prevention

The best way to prevent measles is to talk to your provider and make sure you are up to date with your measles vaccination. Vaccinations are safe. The benefits far outweigh any risks.

- If you have been exposed to someone who has measles, call your provider to let them know of the exposure and help determine if you are immune.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “measles infection has a higher risk of complications when it occurs in the college-age group.”
- If you have never been immunized against measles, it is not too late. Contact your provider to receive measles immunization to protect against becoming infected in the future.

We appreciate your willingness to stay informed about this serious illness and take any necessary precautions. Please contact your healthcare provider or Student Health Services if you have any additional questions.