

## What You Need to Know About Immunizations & the Measles Outbreak

As the measles outbreak continues in our region, we want to provide you with as much information as possible to help you prepare for the summer ahead.

### EVERY CAMP SHOULD:

- 1. Decide what your camp's vaccination policy is for campers and staff** – Decide whether or not your camp will accept campers and staff who aren't vaccinated. Will religious exemptions be accepted? Will Medical exemptions be accepted? If so, will you be more diligent about making sure it's official and verifiable? ACA-Accreditation standards allow for a camp to accept campers who have not been immunized due to medical, religious or other reasons — requiring instead that the parent/custodial guardian can sign a waiver form. Understand the risk if you do accept a camper or staff member who has not been immunized for measles. If someone not protected through immunization comes in contact with an infected person, many public health departments have initiated mandatory 21 day quarantine. Each public health department may handle this differently. For example, where the quarantine occurs (camp or elsewhere), who is quarantined including potential distinctions between people who have a medically documented reason for not being immunized (e.g. immune-compromised) versus those whose parents chose not to.
- 2. Communicate to camp families and staff about your policy** – Whether this is an email to camp families or stated on your website, make sure to communicate whatever your policy is on accepting unvaccinated campers and staff.
- 3. Decide on a refund policy** – If there is a case of measles at your camp, decide what your refund policy is and make sure to communicate that within your policy.
- 4. Know each camper and staff member's immunization status** - Require an immunization history (including month and year for each type of immunization) for each camper and staff member on the camp's health history form. This is particularly important when illness associated with lack of immunization occurs. Understand your state's exemptions from school immunization requirements as well.
- 5. Ensure you have educated healthcare staff** - While only a physician can diagnose measles, ensure that your healthcare staff understands the symptoms and has procedures in place to immediately seek medical care if measles are suspected.
- 6. Consider tracking the percent of immunized campers and staff at your camp** - This may be important information for parents of children who cannot be immunized; it helps them understand the potential risk exposure for their child. Use data from last season if tracking this season's percent is challenging.

**7. Understand the facts about the disease** - Measles is a highly contagious disease caused by a virus. Measles can be serious — even fatal — for young children. While rare, it can lead to pneumonia, encephalitis (swelling of the brain), and death. People exposed to measles who have not been vaccinated almost always get measles.

**FOR NY CAMPS:**

**1. You must track all campers and staff that are unvaccinated or under vaccinated** -The Department of Health will be looking for this at the inspections. Sample sheets have been distributed to Westchester County camps.

**2. Know that DOH will exclude all unvaccinated and under vaccinated campers and staff if there's a case of measles at your camp or possibly within a certain radius of your camp** - If there is an outbreak, the DOH will exclude all campers and staff that can't prove immunity prior to the outbreak. This will include those who have only had one MMR vaccination (even if they are following the recognized vaccine schedule such as a 4 year old).

**3. Insurance company - Contact your insurance company about your coverage in case of such an occurrence.**

**4. Contact your county health department if you have one as their requirements may be stricter than the State's.**

**5. If your camp or your county health department is going to require all camp staff to be vaccinated, each staff must have proof of immunity through either vaccination records, a blood test (titer's test) or a booster shot (get a receipt as proof).**

**6. Have someone on your staff register with [NYSIIS](#) in order to be able to access vaccination records. There's one data base for New York City and one for the rest of the state.**