Background

The U.S. is currently experiencing a large, multistate outbreak of measles linked to an amusement park in California. Healthcare professionals should consider measles when evaluating:

- Cough
- Coryza
- Conjunctivitis
- Fever with or without a rash

Staff should also ask about a patient’s vaccine status, recent travel history and contact with individuals who have had febrile rash illnesses.

Measles basics

- Onset of measles symptoms occurs 8 to 12 days after exposure. Fever, cough, coryza and conjunctivitis are the initial manifestations.
- A prodromal rash usually appears 14 days after exposure.
- The period of contagiousness begins one to two days before onset of respiratory symptoms (usually four days before the appearance of the rash) and continues until four days after the rash appears.
- Duration of transmissibility is prolonged for at least the duration of illness in immunocompromised individuals.

- Measles does NOT occur in individuals with immunity. A person would not be susceptible if he has had:
  - An active case of measles with diagnostic confirmation
  - Two MMR vaccines at 12 to 15 months of age and again at 4 years or older
  - A protective measles IgG antibody titer
- People born before 1957 are presumed to be immune from measles.
- Encourage people to confirm their personal immunization status to protect both themselves and those who cannot be vaccinated.

Infection prevention precautions within Children’s

- Place exposed and susceptible patients into an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) and exclude susceptible healthcare personnel.
- All providers entering the AIIR must wear a fit-tested N-95 mask regardless of measles immune status.
- Limit number of persons entering the AIIR.
- Patients and family members should wear a surgical mask until their measles vaccination status is confirmed.
- A patient should wear a surgical mask while being transported. Infants unable to wear a mask may have their nose and mouth covered with a sheet or blanket or may be placed in an isolette or isopod.

Post-exposure care for healthcare workers

Administer measles vaccine to exposed susceptible persons within 72 hours after the exposure or administer immune globulin (when available) within six days of the exposure event for high-risk persons in whom vaccine is contraindicated.