

May 1, 2024

Dear School Staff, Parents, Guardians and Caregivers:

Re: Ensuring a safe school environment: What happens if there is a case of measles in school

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted routine vaccinations, leading to increased measles cases globally. We recently had a confirmed measles case in York Region and other confirmed measles cases in surrounding regional areas. Measles is a very contagious viral infection. It spreads easily through the air and close contact when a person infected with measles breathes, coughs or sneezes.

If a measles case is identified at school, under-vaccinated/unvaccinated staff and students (without documented immunity) may be excluded for 21 days after the last measles exposure to prevent the virus from spreading further. This highlights the importance of ensuring your and your child's measles vaccinations are up-to-date to protect them and the school community.

Please check your and your child's vaccination status. If you are unsure about you or your child's vaccination history, check your or your child's Ontario Immunization Record (yellow card), [Immunization Connect Ontario \(ICON\)](#) (for students in York Region) or speak with your primary health care provider.

You or your child are considered protected against measles and can attend school if there is a measles case if one of these applies to you:

Year of Birth	Are you protected against measles?
Born before 1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none">You are considered immune and protected as measles was widely spreading before 1970If you are unsure if you had measles as a child, you can get one dose of the measles vaccine (MMR)
Born in 1970 or later	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Received two doses of the measles vaccine on or after the first birthday. A vaccination record (such as a yellow card) or health record is needed as proof of vaccination, ORA blood test result showing measles immunity: A blood test may take some time to complete if you don't know your status, ORA record of confirmed measles infection

Where to get vaccinated

Measles vaccines are free for all Ontarians.

Students: Students can catch up on their routine vaccinations, including measles, by visiting their primary health care provider, a walk-in medical clinic, or a York Region Public Health (YRPH) community vaccine clinic (by [appointment](#) only).

YORK REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/measles



All individuals 12 months and older may get the measles (MMR) vaccine at a:

- Primary health care provider
- Medical [walk-in clinic](#)
- YRPH vaccine clinic (by [appointment](#) only) if you do **not** have access to vaccines through a health care provider

Report your child's vaccinations

Submit your child's measles vaccination record to YRPH through [Immunization Connect Ontario \(ICON\)](#). This helps ensure school immunization records are up to date.

Know measles symptoms

Even if vaccinated, look out for symptoms if you or your child comes into contact with someone with measles:

- Cough
- Runny nose
- Fever
- Red and watery eyes
- A red, blotchy rash. Typically, beginning at the head and spreads down the body to the arms and legs, usually appearing three to seven days after becoming ill. The rash disappears in the same order of appearance (head to foot) in about four to seven days
- Sensitivity to light
- Small white spots with a white centre inside the mouth (Koplik spots)

Do not go to work or school if you or your child experience these symptoms. Seek medical care. Call your doctor, primary health care provider or a medical walk-in clinic before visiting, so they can take precautions to avoid spreading the virus. Follow their guidance and medical advice.

If you have any questions about measles and measles vaccinations, call 1-877-464-9675, ext. 73456 (Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or visit york.ca/measles.

Thank you for keeping everyone safe and healthy in our communities.