

Measures to be taken against infection and spread of measles in Iceland.

As previously reported by the media, four Icelandic individuals have been diagnosed with measles in Iceland. The first individual was infected abroad but the three remaining were infected in Iceland. The infection was transmitted to these three individuals onboard a domestic aircraft on 15 February 2019. Of these four infected individuals, two are adults and two are infants. Apparently all four individuals had not received vaccination for measles. This confirms how contagious measles are.

The Chief Epidemiologist of Iceland in cooperation with the Primary Health Care Sector, Landspítali University Hospital and other experts have issued the following recommendations to prevent further spread:

1. **Quarantine.** Individuals who have not been vaccinated against measles and have been in contact with an infected individual are requested to stay at home from day 6 until day 21 after the exposure. The incubation period for measles, i.e. time period from exposure to onset of symptoms, is 7-21 days. Infected individuals are contagious for 24 hours before onset of symptoms and remain contagious for approximately ten days.
2. **Vaccination against measles.** Illness can be prevented if unvaccinated individuals are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure. It is recommended that unvaccinated family members of an infected person should receive vaccination to prevent further transmission. Young children (6-12 months old) can be vaccinated, but it is not confirmed whether vaccinating at such young age is beneficial. Therefore these children should be vaccinated again at 18 months of age, as scheduled.
3. **In case of illness.** Individuals who believe that they or their children could have symptoms caused by measles, are requested not to attend any health care facility. Instead, they are requested to call the number 1700 or their primary health care center for advice. If needed, a home visit by a physician for medical examination and diagnosis and possibly transfer to a hospital can be organized.
4. **Information regarding measles.** Please call the number 1700 or your primary health care center.

According to the Chief Epidemiologist of Iceland that 90-95% of people in Iceland are vaccinated against measles, so a widespread outbreak is unlikely, but unvaccinated infants are at the most risk.

Chief Epidemiologist of Iceland.