

With Measles on the Rise, Capital BlueCross Reminds Members that Vaccines are Covered

With the recent incident of measles exposure in the Lehigh Valley, Capital BlueCross is reminding its members that the vaccination for measles, MMR, is covered through most benefit plans.

At least 15 cases of measles have been confirmed in Pennsylvania this year and more than 1,200 cases have been reported nationwide, the largest number of cases in the U.S. since 1992.

Measles can be spread through sneezing, coughing or other contact with mucus or saliva from an infected person. One way it is shared is when travelers return home from other countries where measles is still common, only to infect communities in the United States where groups of people are unvaccinated. Typical symptoms for this highly contagious yet vaccine-preventable disease include rash, high fever, cough and red, watery eyes, and can appear one to three weeks after you have been exposed.

"The first line of defense against the measles is prevention, so getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself," said [Jennifer Chambers, MD, MBA, FACP, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer](#). "Capital BlueCross cares deeply about the health of our members, their families and our communities, and getting vaccinated is the best defense against preventing measles."

Vaccines safeguard those with compromised or weakened immune systems, including infants and the elderly. If you believe you are experiencing any of the symptoms associated with the measles, you should notify your doctor immediately and tell them you may have been exposed, Dr. Chambers added.

Members can get vaccinated by their physician, or members with Capital BlueCross pharmacy benefits can also stop by any participating retail pharmacy; however, you should confirm the vaccine is available prior to the visit. MMR is administered to children when they are 12 to 15 months of age, and a second MMR vaccine is recommended between the ages of 4 and 6.

While most people are not at risk because they have been immunized or have had measles, those most at risk, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), are:

- Infants under age 1 who are too young to have received the MMR vaccine
- Unvaccinated individuals
- Individuals from parts of the world where there is low vaccination coverage

"By providing members with free access to the measles vaccination, they are better equipped to protect themselves and their families against this dangerous disease at such a critical time. Members should exercise responsibility to themselves, their families and the community at large by following vaccine recommendations."

The measles vaccine should not be given to pregnant women, those with weakened immune systems and those who already have received full immunization and have immunity to the virus.

For more information on measles, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

<https://capbluecross.mediaroom.com/news-releases?item=122517>