



# News Release

**For immediate release:** April 2, 2014

(14-047)

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## **Measles: Whatcom County case, potential public exposures in other counties**

**OLYMPIA** — A person who was confirmed with measles traveled to several western Washington public locations while contagious. Most people in our state are immune to measles, so the public risk is low except for people who are unvaccinated. People who haven't been vaccinated or aren't sure if they're immune should ask a health care professional for advice.

Public health officials say the Whatcom County woman in her 20s became contagious with measles March 26 after visiting a local family with measles linked to an outbreak in British Columbia. She worked at the Lynden Dutch Bakery while contagious. Measles is highly contagious and can cause severe illness with rash, fever, cough, eye irritation, and can be fatal.

The woman traveled to Seattle for a Kings of Leon concert at Key Arena on March 28, when she also was at the Best Western Loyal Inn and the Wasabi Bistro. The next day, she was at Beth's Café, Aurora Suzuki, Starbucks at First and Pike, and the Pike Place Market. On those same dates she visited several locations in Pierce County, including Celebrity Cake Studio, LeMay Car Museum, Harmon Brewing Company, and some department stores. A [complete list of the locations and the times](#) of potential public exposure are available online.

Anyone who was in those locations at the listed times should find out if they have been vaccinated for measles or have had measles previously. People who are unvaccinated, aren't sure if they're immune, and develop an illness with fever or unexplained rash should consult a health care professional immediately. Public health officials urge them to call ahead to their clinic, doctor's office, or emergency room before arriving so people in waiting rooms aren't exposed.

[Measles is highly contagious](#) even before the rash starts, and is easily spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes — if you're not vaccinated, you can get the measles just by walking into a room where someone with the disease has been in the past couple of hours.

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Washington typically has five or fewer measles cases per year; so far in 2014, there have been seven. Symptoms begin seven-to-21 days after exposure and is contagious for about four days before rash appears until four days afterward. People at highest risk from exposure to measles include those who are unvaccinated, pregnant women, infants under six months of age and those with weakened immune systems.

Children should be vaccinated with two doses of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine, with the first dose between 12 and 15 months and the second at four-to-six years. Adults should have at least one measles vaccination, with some people needing two. The state [Department of Health immunization program](#) has more information about measles and measles vaccine.

In an unrelated situation, a single measles case in San Juan County has been confirmed and health officials are working to contact people who may have been exposed. Information is available on the [state health department website](#) and [online from San Juan County](#).

Also, a traveler from California [passed through SeaTac Airport on March 21-22](#) while contagious with measles. Public Health — Seattle & King County is leading the investigation.

The [Department of Health website](#) ([www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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