Prevent Measles with MMR Vaccine

Most of today’s practicing physicians and advanced practice providers have never seen a case of measles. A few of us had that opportunity many years ago. Thanks to the MMR vaccine, this disease was declared eradicated in 2000. Eradicated means there are no endemic Measles in the USA. The only cases are imported from other countries, and are controlled. However, this is no longer the case, primarily due to a large population of Americans that travel the world, including countries without a robust vaccination program, in combination with our own substantial unimmunized population in the US.

The Measles epidemic is real and growing. It is not yet in Ohio, but it is in 3 neighboring states, so it is just a matter of time before we are added to the list. The reasons for remaining unimmunized are multiple, and are not my current focus.

I want to address how you can help by encouraging MMR vaccination and to answer the FAQs you will receive, especially when Ohio becomes part of the outbreak.

Facts:

- Measles is an exceptionally infectious disease, spread by respiratory droplets.
- Patients are infectious from 4 days prior to the rash to 4 days after the rash.
- 90% of unimmunized persons in a room where there is an active Measles case will develop Measles.
- The virus will persist in the room up to 2 hours after the infected person leaves the room.
- Two doses of MMR provide 97% effectiveness.
- In adults born in 1957 and going forward, without evidence of infection or immunity, should receive one dose of MMR.
- It is more cost-effective to simply immunize adults that are unsure of their status with the MMR rather than checking titers; and it is safe.
- The alleged connection of the MMR to Autism has been unequivocally disproven in multiple scientific studies.
- 1-2 children per 1000 infected with Measles will die of respiratory and/or neurologic complications.
- 1 child in 500 will be hospitalized with pneumonia.
- 1 child in 1000 will develop encephalitis and be left with permanent neurologic deficits.

Please see the attached document on advice for healthcare workers. We sent this out recently, but it is important enough to send again.

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Mission:

Prevent. Promote, Protect. Public Health is Our Passion!