



**FROM:** Communicable Disease Prevention Unit  
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## MEASLES ON THE RISE 2011 - EUROPE and USA

The US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has reported a rise in measles cases among returned US travelers during the first few months of 2011.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority appear to have been acquired overseas, in Europe, Asia and Africa. About half of reported US cases occurred in children ages 6 – 23 months. Fifteen cases of measles have been reported in California. Some of the cases have been intentionally unvaccinated children and other cases have been infants ages 6-11 months who could have received an early dose of MMR prior to their international travel.<sup>2</sup>

Measles transmission has been unusually active in Europe. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health authorities have confirmed measles cases across 38 European countries during the first 4 months of 2011.<sup>3</sup> The largest concentration of cases has occurred in France, followed by Spain. In France during the same time period there have been close to 10,000 reported cases, including 12 cases of encephalitis, 360 cases of severe measles pneumonia, and 6 measles-related deaths.<sup>4</sup>

Persons (including children) seeking pre-travel vaccination may contact the SFDPH Adult Immunization & Travel Clinic at (415) 554-2625 or [www.sfdph.org/aitc](http://www.sfdph.org/aitc).

### **Recommendations:**

1. Maintain a high level of suspicion for measles in the diagnosis of persons with a febrile rash illness and a history of travel outside the USA. Please see our quick guide for Clinicians at: <http://www.sfdcpc.org/measles.html> and report any persons with a clinical presentation consistent with measles "24/7" to the Communicable Disease Control and Prevention Section at 415-554-2830.
2. For anyone planning international travel, especially those traveling to Europe, Asia or Africa, ensure, immunity to measles for their own protection and to prevent importation of the measles virus into the USA.
3. Before international travel, infants 6 months through 11 months of age should have at least 1 dose of the MMR vaccine. Children 12 months of age or older, adolescents, and adults born after 1957 should have had 2 lifetime doses of the MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days or documented immunity to measles by serology.

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1. MMWR Weekly April 8, 2011 / 60(13);397-400
  2. CDPH Health Advisory, May 25, 2011
  3. WHO Epidemiological Brief (Regional Office for Europe) / No. 14 / May 2011
  4. MMWR Weekly May 27, 2011/ 60(20);666-668



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