



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE  
Oxiris Barbot, MD  
*Commissioner*

April 10, 2019

Dear Colleague:

As you are aware, there is a large measles outbreak occurring in the Orthodox Jewish community in Williamsburg and Borough Park, Brooklyn. We expect community transmission to continue and therefore recommend that **pregnant women be screened for measles immunity**. Many offices are already obtaining measles IgG antibody results as part of the panel that is ordered to determine rubella immunity.

Because the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) is a live virus vaccine, it should not be given during pregnancy. Vaccine should be administered to nonimmune women immediately postpartum before hospital discharge, similar to the recommendation for rubella vaccine.

During this outbreak, numerous measles exposures have occurred in health care settings and have affected pregnant women. In these cases, it is critical that the woman's measles immunity be assessed quickly to determine if she should receive intravenous immune globulin (IVIG). Nonimmune pregnant women exposed to measles should receive 400 mg/kg of IVIG as post-exposure prophylaxis within six days of exposure. Because we often do not learn about the exposure until several days afterwards, the Health Department has often been checking immunity when the deadline for IVIG is approaching. Having immunity documented in the chart has greatly facilitated management of these women.

Consider the diagnosis of measles in clinically compatible cases, with symptoms including fever and a generalized maculopapular rash, and immediately isolate suspect cases. Report suspected cases of measles immediately to the Health Department at 866-692-3641 at the time of initial clinical suspicion. Do not wait for laboratory confirmation to report. For more information about reporting, post-exposure prophylaxis, laboratory testing, MMR vaccine recommendations and reporting suspect measles cases, visit our [Measles Information for providers](#) webpage.

If you have general questions about measles, please call the Health Department at 347-396-2400. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rosen, MD  
Director, Epidemiology and Surveillance  
Bureau of Immunization

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc  
Assistant Commissioner  
Bureau of Immunization