May 23, 2019

**Important Message Regarding Measles from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services**

Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. While there are no cases in Wisconsin, several of our neighboring states including Illinois, most recently in Chicago, Iowa and Michigan do have confirmed cases of measles. The Fox Point Bayside School District cares about your children’s health and we want to share with you the important information below.

**What is measles?**
Measles is a respiratory (lung) illness that caused by a virus. It spreads through the air when someone who is sick with the virus coughs or sneezes. Early symptoms may include cough, runny nose, high fevers, pink eye, and a red rash with raised bumps that begins at the hairline and moves down the body. Later symptoms may include pneumonia and swelling of the brain that can rarely lead to death.

**What if my child has measles symptoms?**
Call your doctor right away. Keep your child at home until you are able to talk with your doctor. When your child is sick and they still go to school or sports, the virus can spread to other students.

**How can we prevent measles from spreading?**
The best way for us to prevent the spread is through vaccination with the MMR vaccine. The MMR vaccine is safe and effective for protecting against measles, mumps, and rubella. Children need two doses for full protection:

- The first dose is given at ages 12 through 15 months.
- The second dose is given at ages four through six years. In Wisconsin, the second dose is required for kindergarten entry.
- If children ages 7-18 are unvaccinated, give two doses separated by at least 28 days.

**Should adults get the MMR vaccine?**
Yes, adults should check to see that they are up to date with MMR and other vaccines.

- Adults born before 1957 are considered to be immune (protected) against measles.
- Adults born on or after January 1, 1957, need at least one dose of measles containing vaccine.
If you are unsure if you are protected, talk to your doctor.

How do I know if my children already received these vaccines?
You can look up their vaccine record through the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR). Contact your doctor or local health department if you need help.

Where can my children get the vaccines they need?

- If you have insurance, including Medicaid, call your doctor to make an appointment.
- If you do not have insurance, or have insurance that does not cover vaccines, you may qualify for the Wisconsin Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Please contact your local health department to learn more.

For additional information, regarding measles and the safety of the MMR vaccine please see the information leaflet titled “Measles and the Vaccine (Shot) to Prevent It” or for additional details and resources, visit these websites: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or WI Department of Health Services.

Lastly, if you have any questions or concerns that you would like to share with me please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you,

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