

First confirmed case of measles in Chicago is 8th in state this year, health officials say

May 20 2019, by Katherine Rosenberg-Douglas, Chicago Tribune

A second case of measles in Cook County is the first in the city of Chicago and the eighth in the state of Illinois so far this year, according to health officials.

Elena Ivanova, a spokeswoman for the city of Chicago, confirmed the city's first case of [measles](#) in an email on Sunday. She said the patient "is an international traveler who was in several countries that are experiencing [measles outbreaks](#)."

The traveler came through O'Hare International Airport, and people across the city may have been exposed to measles Thursday or Friday on public transit, at [retail stores](#) and at the University of Illinois at Chicago, according to a news release. Health officials said exposure may have occurred:

May 16 on [public transit](#) from Chicago O'Hare International Airport to the University of Illinois at Chicago campus;

May 16 in the Loop and Millennium Park;

May 16 at retail stores on South Canal Street and on State Street between Monroe and Randolph streets;

and May 17 at UIC Student Center East.

Ivanova said the city is working closely with the health care facility to

notify all individuals who may have been exposed to measles.

"The Chicago Department of Public Health is working closely with the higher risk locations to identify all individuals who were likely to have been exposed and to make sure those individuals are immune or that appropriate prevention measures are taken if they are not immune," she wrote in an email.

Ivanova said Chicago has one of the highest measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination rates in the nation. Most children and adults in Chicago are protected from measles, she said.

The earlier Cook County case of measles was in March. According to the Centers for Disease Control, as of May 10 there have been 839 measles cases in the United States this year, more than any year since 1994.

Earlier this month, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* published a study from researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, which listed Cook County as the most vulnerable county in the nation for a measles outbreak.

Ivanova said that among those traveling outside the U.S. or to sites in the U.S. with active outbreaks, the following individuals should receive vaccine:

Infants 6 months through 11 months of age should receive one dose of MMR vaccine.

Children 12 months of age and older should receive two doses of MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days.

Adults who do not have evidence of immunity against measles should get

two doses of MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days

Adults with documentation of one dose of MMR vaccine should get a second dose.

Ivanova said the measles [vaccine](#) is safe and effective. It is also readily available in health care facilities including pharmacies and grocery stores throughout Chicago. MMR vaccination locations can be found at www.vaccines.gov/getting/where.

Measles starts with a fever that can get very high. Some of the other symptoms that may occur are coughs, [runny nose](#), red eyes, diarrhea and a rash of tiny, red spots that start at the head and spread to the rest of the body, Ivanova said.

For more information about measles, contact your health care provider or visit www.cityofchicago.org/measles

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