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Measles Exposure Alert for US Travelers After Australia Case

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Health authorities in Western Australia have identified new exposure sites following a confirmed measles case involving a returned traveller from Bali. This recent case adds to a growing cluster of infections across Perth and the Pilbara regions, raising concerns about the risk of measles spread linked to international travel.

Officials warn that travelers to and from affected regions should verify their vaccination status to prevent further transmission. The Western Australia Health Department confirmed the infectious individual visited multiple public locations, including a popular brunch venue in Highgate, between July 31 and August 6.

Dr. Clare Huppatz, acting director of the Communicable Disease Control Directorate, emphasised the highly contagious nature of measles. “Measles is a vaccine-preventable disease spread through airborne droplets, which can remain infectious in the air for up to 30 minutes after an infected person has left,” she explained.

Symptoms typically appear around 10 days after exposure, although the incubation period can extend up to 18 days. Early signs include fever, fatigue, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. A distinctive red, non-itchy rash usually emerges three to four days later, beginning on the face and spreading across the body.

Currently, Western Australia has reported 26 measles cases, making it the state with the second-highest number of infections in the country, following Victoria, which has recorded 32 cases. Nationally, Australia has reported 91 cases.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises travelers to ensure their measles vaccinations are up to date before international trips, especially to areas experiencing outbreaks. Measles remains a concern globally, despite being preventable through immunization.

US health experts stress the importance of vaccination in maintaining herd immunity and preventing outbreaks. “Travel-related cases highlight the ongoing risk of measles importation and transmission,” said a CDC spokesperson. “Vaccination remains the most effective defense.”

If you suspect you or someone close to you may have contracted measles, seek medical advice promptly. Contact your healthcare provider or visit the nearest emergency department, and call ahead to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to others.

For the latest information on measles exposure sites and health advisories in Australia, visit the Western Australia Health Department’s official website