



Varicella in an International Organization for Migration (IOM) Airport Employee in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
6 March 2014

Dear State Refugee Health Coordinator:

CDC has been notified of one case of varicella (chickenpox) in an IOM airport employee who was in close contact with refugees departing from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and going to the United States on February 26, 2014. The employee's fever began on February 28 and varicella lesions erupted on March 2.

Refugees who were part of the caseload assisted by this employee have already arrived in the following states: NC, MD, DC/VA, CT, PA, RI, and NY. If your state is listed here, an Advanced Booking Notification (ABN) will be posted to your state-specific DGMQ Epi-X Refugee Health Forum.

Most persons in the United States have immunity to varicella, either through vaccination or past exposure. However, we do ask that you verify evidence of immunity among any staff working on the resettlement of these refugees. Varicella spreads from person to person by direct contact, through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or from the aerosolization of virus from skin lesions. Varicella can be serious, especially in babies, adults, and people with weakened immune systems. A person with varicella is typically contagious 1-2 days before the rash appears and until all blisters have formed scabs. Rash onset occurs 10-21 days after a person is exposed to the virus. Additional information on how persons can protect themselves against varicella is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/vaccination.html> or through your local health department.

CDC does not anticipate that there will be any follow up regarding this situation, but if that changes, we will notify you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "H. Burke".

Heather Burke

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