



Rubella case in a Congolese refugee from Burundi

6 August 2015

Dear State Refugee Health Coordinator:

On August 4, 2015, CDC was notified by the Texas Department of State Health Services of a rubella case in an adult Congolese refugee resettled from Burundi. The refugee arrived in Texas on July 9, 2015 and developed rash, fever, and severe headache on approximately July 24, 2015. He sought care for his illness on July 26, 2015 and a positive IgM for rubella was reported on July 31, 2015. Additional confirmatory testing is currently being performed.

There is currently no known rubella outbreak in Burundi. However, due to the ongoing political instability in Burundi, outbreak detection and reporting may not be optimal. Rubella vaccination is not part of routine childhood vaccination in Burundi. The vaccination program for U.S.-bound refugees has not yet started in Burundi; therefore, the U.S.-bound refugees are currently not receive measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine before departure. CDC, PRM, and IOM are working to implement MMR vaccination for refugees before departure. But, due to the political instability, it is not clear when pre-departure vaccination for U.S.-bound refugees will begin. CDC will provide an update when pre-departure vaccination activities are initiated. All vaccines will be documented on the refugee's overseas records (DS-3025 form or official documentation).

Individual states will be notified of any refugee arrivals coming from Burundi to their state that may have had contact with this refugee. For refugees arriving to the U.S. from Burundi, CDC interim recommendations include the following:

1. Check for evidence of receipt of MMR vaccine overseas.
 - a. For refugees from Burundi who do not have documentation of MMR vaccination, provide MMR vaccine to those aged six months through 58 years of age (born in 1957 or later). Information about rubella vaccination is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/measles/default.htm>
 - b. For refugees from Burundi who have official documentation of receipt of **one** MMR vaccine overseas, provide a second dose of MMR vaccine to those aged 12 months through 58 years of age (born in 1957 or later) at least 4 weeks after the first dose.
 - c. For those refugees who have documentation of receipt of two MMR vaccine doses overseas, no further vaccination needs to be done, provided the dose intervals and minimum age are acceptable.
2. Refugees arriving to the U.S. from Burundi should also be seen for their post-arrival health examinations as soon as feasible.
3. Consider rubella as a diagnosis in anyone with a febrile rash illness lasting 3 days or more, a temperature of 101°F (38.3°C) or higher, and clinically compatible symptoms (cough, coryza, and/or conjunctivitis) who has recently traveled abroad or who has had contact with someone with a febrile rash illness. Immunocompromised patients may not exhibit rash or may exhibit an atypical rash. The incubation period for postnatally acquired rubella ranges from 14 to 21 days, usually 16 to 18 days.

4. Isolate suspect rubella case-patients and immediately report cases to local health departments to ensure a prompt public health response.
5. Contact the local health department for specific guidance on the management of pregnant women.

Rubella spreads from person to person by direct contact or through the air through coughing or sneezing. Additional information on rubella is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/rubella/> and through your local health department. CDC, in partnership with in-country and international partners, will continue to monitor the situation in Burundi, and will follow up with additional information and recommendations as they become available.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Heather Burke
Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health Branch
Division of Global Migration and Quarantine
Phone: (404) 639.3408