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Sydney sounds measles health alert

July 31, 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: A public health alert has been sounded in Sydney after a person contracted the highly infectious virus. The director of public health in the region also launched an awareness campaign after the incident.

"Measles is very contagious among those who are not fully immunized and is spread through coughing and sneezing. The first symptoms that people get are fever, tiredness, a cough and a runny nose, so very general symptoms. A few days later they get a rash that starts on the face and spreads over the body," Sydney local health district's director of public health, Ms Leena Gupta explained in a statement.

After the person from Sydney's inner west region, Leichhardt suffered, the health authorities are urging anyone who has visited the area during the past ten days to be aware of the symptoms.

The statement said that all children are routinely immunized against measles, in conjunction with mumps and rubella (German measles), in a vaccine commonly known as MMR. Children receive the first immunization dose of MMR at 12 months and the second dose at 18 months, it added.

Ms Gupta added that those at risk of infection are people born in 1966 or later and who have never had measles and not had two doses of the vaccine.