

# Canadians Told To Get Vaccinated Against Measles

*Doctors Say It Is A Serious Disease Which Can Lead To Several Complications, Even Death*

TORONTO: Canada's top doctor is urging Canadians who haven't been vaccinated against measles to get their shots in the wake of a B.C. outbreak of the disease and the always present danger of cases being imported into the country by travellers.

Dr. Teresa Tam, Canada's chief public health officer, said measles is a "serious and highly contagious disease" and that getting inoculated is the best way to avoid getting sick \_ and transmitting it to others.

Tam's comments on Tuesday come in the wake of a cluster of nine cases of measles in Vancouver that began in recent weeks after an unvaccinated Canadian child contracted the disease on a family trip to Vietnam.

"There's always a risk of measles importation into Canada," Tam said from Ottawa. "We eliminated measles in Canada (in 1998), but what we're seeing is importation from when people go

travelling to another country and then bring it back.

"But when they bring it back to pockets of underimmunized groups, then we're going to see the potential for more people to be infected in Canada itself."

Infection with the measles virus starts with a high fever, coughing, sneezing and red eyes, followed by the development of a blotchy, painful rash, said Dr. Sarah Wilson of Public Health Ontario. "The rash starts on the face and moves down onto the trunk, to the chest and the back, and then it spreads to cover the whole body."

Measles can lead to such complications as ear infections, blindness, pneumonia and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). It can also be fatal. The disease is highly contagious, spreading through virus-laden droplets after an infected person coughs or sneezes.

"I think one of the features of measles that makes it so exqui-



sitely infectious is that it's airborne," said Wilson, noting that viral particles can remain in the environment for up to two hours after being introduced.

"Those measles virus particles can stay suspended in the air and anyone who's unvaccinated who then goes into that doctor's office or restaurant or airport lounge, they can acquire measles."

Another complicating feature of measles is that it can be con-

tagious for four days before the rash arises, said Tam.

"Prior to that, when you're developing the fever, the cough, the runny nose, you're infectious and people don't even know it's measles," she said. "And that I think is another reason why it can spread before you know it."

But Tam said getting two doses of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is virtually 100 per cent effective in preventing the disease within a given population.

Some people cannot be vaccinated, including infants under six months of age, people with certain underlying health conditions and those undergoing chemotherapy \_ meaning they must rely on high levels of immunity within their communities to prevent infection with the virus.

To achieve that protection \_ called herd immunity \_ a community needs a vaccine coverage of about 95 per cent of residents,

Tam said. Canada has close to 90 per cent coverage, but average uptake of the MMR vaccine varies from province to province and region to region.

Canadians born before 1970 are assumed to have natural immunity to measles, a disease long considered a childhood rite of passage, despite its dangers.

For those born after 1970, who aren't sure if they've been vaccinated, there is no increased risk of adverse effects from getting the MMR vaccine, said Wilson. The two-dose inoculation provides lifelong immunity.

"The vaccine against the measles virus is one of the most effective vaccines that we have," noted Tam. "So I think what we want to stress is that right now is really a good time to make sure you are up to date with two doses of measles vaccine if you were born after 1970, because we are seeing these importations."

*File pic: (AP/Eric Risberg)*

## Netflix Announces Creation Of Toronto Production Hub

TORONTO: Netflix is setting up a dedicated production hub in Toronto, which film and TV creators hope will provide new opportunities for local talent.

The California-based streaming giant announced Tuesday it is expanding its presence in Canada by leasing two studio spaces along the downtown industrial waterfront area.

At Cinespace Studios, Netflix is leasing four new sound stages \_ along with spaces for office and support work \_ totalling approximately 164,000 sq. ft. At Pinewood Toronto Studios, Netflix is also leasing four sound stages and adjacent office space totalling 84,580 sq. ft.

Netflix said the commitment

will provide jobs for up to 1,850 Canadians per year, and that the leases are "multi-year" but didn't specify for exactly how long.

"This is great news for the Toronto and the Ontario community, because it's an endorsement of the high quality of the work that comes out of our industry," said Jim Mirkopoulos, vice-president of Cinespace.

"Netflix has made a commitment to the film and television industry here that they're going to continue to do stuff and by making this announcement, they're standing by that," added Nanci MacLean, president of Pinewood Toronto Studios. Cinespace said its sound stages leased by Netflix are under construction and set

to be operational this summer.

Pinewood said Netflix will move a production onto one of its sound stages in the next couple of weeks. The four sound stages being leased are separate from Pinewood Toronto Studios' previously announced planned expansion.

Projects already set to be made at the hub include the horror anthology series "Guillermo del Toro Presents Ten After Midnight" and the film "Let It Snow."

Netflix has production facilities in Los Angeles and recently announced new hubs for Madrid and Albuquerque, N.M.

It also leases British Columbia's Martini Film Studios and production sites across Canada on a case-by-case basis.

Its co-productions with Canadian partners have included "Anne with an E" and "Alias Grace" with CBC, "Travelers" with Showcase, and "Frontier" with Discovery Canada.

Speculation of a Toronto hub started swirling last month when Mayor John Tory, who has been making annual trips to Los Angeles to lure film and TV projects to the city, told The Canadian Press he had "a very high level of confidence" that Netflix would open one up.

## Imran Says Pakistan Not Involved In Pulwama



Smoke rises from an explosion during an air exercise named 'Vayu Shakti-2019', or air power, at Pokhran, in of Rajasthan. The IAF carried out an exercise near the border with Pakistan, with the fighter jet Tejas, Advanced Light Helicopter, the Akash surface-to-air missile and Astra air-to-air missile, among others. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup)

*Continued from page 1*  
of India - the Indus, the Chenab and the Jhelum with the mean flow of 80 MAF - was given to Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday told the Pakistan Army to respond "decisively and comprehensively" to any aggression or misadventure by India amid rising tensions between the two neighbours.

According to Geo News, Khan issued the directives during a meeting of the National Security Committee which discussed the country's security situation due to heightened tensions with India after the Jaish-e-Mohammed

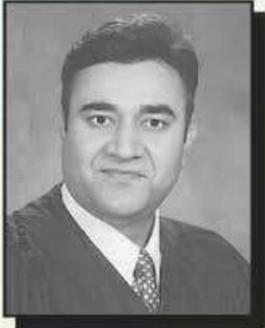
(JeM) claimed the attack. A statement issued after the meeting and cited by Geo News said: "Pakistan was not involved in any way, means or form in the said incident... The incident was conceived, planned and executed indigenously."

Khan denied his country's involvement in the suicide bombing and sought "actionable intelligence", which was termed by India as "lame excuse". "We expect India to positively respond to the offers. Based on the investigation or any tangible evidence provided, the State of Pakistan shall take action against anyone found using our soil,"



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