



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Measles Can Travel*

Multistate Measles Outbreak Associated with an International Youth Sporting Event  
— Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Texas, August–September, 2007  
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*[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.*

*[Ana Benson] Welcome to A Cup of Health with CDC, a weekly broadcast of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm Ana Benson, your host for this week.*

In the United States, measles is no longer a major health concern because most people have been vaccinated against the disease. However, outbreaks of the childhood illness can still occur. A major international sporting event for children, held in the United States in August 2007, resulted in seven people being diagnosed with the measles. Virtually all measles outbreaks in the United States today are caused by someone bringing the disease in from another country and spreading it to others. Such was the case in this most recent outbreak.

Dr. Jane Seward is Deputy Director of CDC's Division of Viral Diseases in the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. Dr. Seward is joining us today to discuss this outbreak and steps that can be taken to prevent future outbreaks. Welcome to the show, Dr. Seward.

*[Dr. Seward] Thank you.*

*[Ana Benson] Dr. Seward, how many countries were involved in this sporting event?*

*[Dr. Seward] In total, 9 countries were involved – the United States and 8 other countries. And 16 teams, all together, from those 9 countries, played in the event.*

*[Ana Benson] Now, do you know how the outbreak began?*

*[Dr. Seward] Yes. The outbreak began with an unvaccinated twelve-year-old child who came from Japan. He had contracted measles, likely from his brother in Japan, before he traveled. But during his travel to the United States, he became symptomatic with measles, and then, by the time he arrived in Pennsylvania, he had a full blown case.*

*[Ana Benson] Now, I understand that there were 6 other cases. What can you tell us about those?*

*[Dr. Seward] Of the other 6 cases, 1 was another child who traveled from Japan. He had also contracted measles in Japan where a large outbreak has been ongoing for quite some time, and he came to attend the same sporting event, and became a case once he arrived in the United States. Of the other 5 cases, 1 case occurred in a person*

who was directly involved in the sporting event; he was a sponsor and he came in close contact with the first case from Japan. The other 4 cases were not directly involved in the sporting event and were infected either on the plane, in an airport, or in Texas, from the sponsor who became infected in Pennsylvania.

[Ana Benson] Now because international travel is so common these days, are outbreaks such as these preventable?

[Dr. Seward] Well, global measles control will help reduce the number of measles imported cases, but measles still does occur throughout the world, so the United States does remain at risk of importations of measles. The best way to prevent outbreaks in the United States is to maintain our current high rates of vaccine coverage. Had we not had such high rates of vaccine coverage, we would have expected a lot more measles cases resulting from these importations. So, the good news is there weren't 30 or 50 cases, there were just 6.

[Ana Benson] Now where can listeners go to get more information about measles?

[Dr. Seward] Listeners can get more information at CDC's website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Then they can choose "Measles" from the A-Z index.

[Ana Benson] Well thank you Dr. Seward. That's it for this week's show. Be sure to join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Ana Benson for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

*[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).*