



CHATTING ABOUT HEALTH

MEASLES

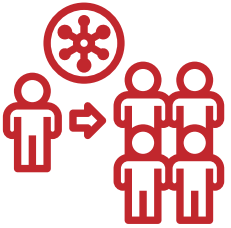
The US is experiencing a dramatic increase in measles cases.

The number of cases reported in the first half of 2025 was already more than 4 times the total number of cases reported in all of 2024.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Measles is one of the most contagious human diseases.

If one person has measles, up to 9 out of 10 unprotected people nearby will become infected.



- Measles spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- You can get measles just by being in a room up to 2 hours after a person with measles has left.
- Because measles is so contagious, it can easily cross borders and cause outbreaks in any community where vaccination coverage rates are below 95%.

Measles can lead to serious illness and death.

Some people think of measles as just a little rash and fever that clear up in a few days.

Measles can cause serious complications especially in certain groups like:

- Children younger than 5 years of age
- Adults over 20 years of age
- Pregnant women
- People with weakened immune systems

Severe Measles Complications

- 1 in 5 unvaccinated people who get measles is hospitalized
- 1 in 20 children with measles gets pneumonia
- 1 in 1000 children with measles will develop encephalitis (swelling of the brain)
- 1 to 3 of every 1000 children who get infected will die from complications
- In unvaccinated mothers, measles can cause premature birth or low birthweight

The best protection against measles is measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

- The MMR vaccine provides long-lasting protection against all strains of measles.
- The first measles vaccine was licensed in 1963.
 - Before the vaccine became available, 3-4 million people got measles each year. Among those infected with measles each year,
 - About 400-500 people died
 - About 48,000 were hospitalized
 - About 1000 got encephalitis (swelling of the brain)
- In 1989, a second vaccine dose was added to the childhood immunization schedule.
- Thanks to the successful vaccination campaign, measles was declared eliminated from the US in 2000.
 - Elimination means there is no measles spreading within the country. New cases are only found when someone gets infected while traveling abroad and returns to the US.



Measles ANYWHERE is a threat EVERYWHERE



- Right now, measles outbreaks are happening in every region of the world.
- Anyone who is not protected against measles can get measles while abroad and easily spread it to others when they return home.

Protect yourself and your family.



- Talk to your doctor and make sure everyone is up to date with recommended vaccines, especially if you are planning to travel somewhere that is experiencing a measles outbreak.
- Call your doctor immediately if you think you or your child have been exposed to measles.

Learn more about Measles

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>

