

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella, MMR Vaccine & You

In 2025 the United States experienced the largest measles outbreak in decades. Most cases have occurred in children and adolescents, but 34% of reported cases involve adults. Most (92%) measles cases involve unvaccinated (or unknown status) people.

Why is There More Measles Activity?

In 2000 measles was “eliminated” in the United States, meaning measles wasn’t spreading in the country. New cases were only found when someone contracted measles abroad and returned to the U.S. Measles wasn’t spreading in the U.S. because a high percentage of the population received the safe and effective measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

As some families choose not to have their children vaccinated with MMR, more measles outbreaks are occurring throughout the U.S. These outbreaks present a risk for people with a weak immune system or who are unprotected.

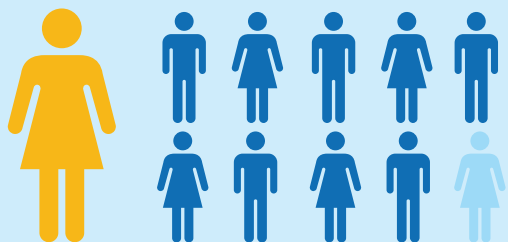
Background on Measles

This increase in measles activity highlights the importance of maintaining high vaccination rates in our communities. **When vaccination coverage falls below the recommended threshold, herd immunity is weakened**, making it easier for this highly contagious disease to spread rapidly among unprotected individuals.

- Measles is spread through the air by sneezing, coughing, and talking and through direct contact with body fluids of an infected person.
- Measles is one of the most contagious viruses known. A measles virus from a cough or sneeze can live in the air space for 2 hours after an infected person has left the room.¹
- If you have measles, up to 90% of the people around you who are not immune will become infected.¹
- In the current U.S. outbreak 11% of adults with measles needed hospital care.²

Measles

is **highly contagious** and spreads through the air when an infected person **coughs or sneezes**.



It's so contagious that if one person has it, **9 out of 10 people** of all ages around him or her will also become infected if they are not protected.

References

¹ How Measles Spreads, CDC, www.cdc.gov/measles/causes/index.html

² Measles Cases and Outbreaks, CDC, www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html

Why Are Vaccinations Important for People Who Take Care of Patients or Residents?

In general, people who care for patients or residents are more likely to catch and spread diseases like measles. If infected you can pass these illnesses on to your residents and your family.

MMR vaccine protects against 3 illnesses – measles, mumps and rubella. MMR vaccine helps protect you, your family members, and your vulnerable patients from these diseases.

MMR Vaccination: The MMR series includes two doses given at least 4 weeks apart, with both doses given on or after the first birthday. A documented MMR vaccination series (or proof of immunity) may be required for your job because you work with vulnerable patients.

Documentation

Keep track of your vaccination dates and blood test results. For those born more recently than 1957, only official written records count; simply remembering you got the vaccine or test isn't enough. You'll need them for new jobs.

Childhood Vaccination Records: You may have already been vaccinated as a child. Vaccine doses given during childhood are considered valid into adulthood. Blood tests to check immunity are not usually needed for vaccinated people working in a health care setting, even if the vaccine was given during childhood. Those who received two properly spaced doses of MMR do not need more doses, even if serology results are negative.

International Vaccination Records: If you moved here from another country it is important to get the MMR series or obtain your immunization records.

Vaccination of Older Adults: MMR vaccine is usually **NOT** recommended for people born before 1957, but during outbreaks, unvaccinated older adults working in a healthcare setting should be considered for vaccination.

**When you choose vaccination you protect yourself, your loved ones, and your residents.
You have the choice to get the MMR vaccine.**

Learn More

- **For everyone: Measles Vaccination, CDC,**
www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccines/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fvaccines%2Fvpd%2Fmmr%2Fpublic%2Findex.html
- **For healthcare workers: Routine Measles, Mumps, and Rubella Vaccination,**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmh/hcp/recommendations.html
- **Immunize.org for questions about MMR vaccine,**
www.immunize.org/?s=mmr+vaccine
- **PALTmed Measles Statement,**
<https://paltmed.org/news-media/paltmed-measles-statement>