



Erie County
Department of
Health



Public Health
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GALE R. BURSTEIN, MD, MPH, FAAP
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

HEALTH ADVISORY #366

March 4, 2025

STAY ALERT FOR MEASLES – CASES INCREASING IN UNITED STATES

Please distribute to Healthcare Providers, Hospitals, Laboratories, Emergency Rooms, Community Health Centers, College Health Centers, and Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatric, Adolescent Medicine, Infectious Disease, and Primary Care Providers

SUMMARY

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) recently issued a [Health Advisory](#) to alert healthcare providers of increasing measles cases in the United States and Canada in 2025. To enhance this messaging with local providers, the Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) is sharing the following information:

- Measles cases and outbreaks are occurring in [Texas](#), [New Mexico](#), [New Jersey](#), and [Canada](#), including in Ontario.
- [New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene](#) has also recently reported 2 unrelated cases of measles since the beginning of 2025.
- [U.S. measles cases and outbreak data](#) are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Most of the measles cases are occurring in persons who are unvaccinated or had unknown vaccination status.
- Measles is a highly contagious viral illness and can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis, and death, especially in unvaccinated persons.
- Measles typically begins with a prodrome of fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis, lasting 2 to 4 days before rash onset. The incubation period for measles from exposure to fever is usually about 10 days (range 7 to 12 days) while rash onset is typically visible around 14 days (range 7 to 21 days) after initial exposure.
- The virus is transmitted through direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. The virus can remain infectious in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours after an infected person leaves an area. Individuals infected with measles are contagious from 4 days before the rash starts through 4 days afterward.
- **Healthcare providers, schools, and early childhood education providers should work to ensure their patients/students are current with the MMR vaccine.**
 - All U.S. residents older than age 6 months without evidence of immunity who are planning to travel internationally should receive MMR vaccine prior to departure. See full vaccination recommendations below



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- Evidence of immunity includes at least one of the following:
 - Born prior to 1957; or
 - Documentation of acceptable vaccination, including dates administered:
 - 2 doses of measles-containing vaccine for children ≥ 4 years and adults at high risk for exposure transmission (i.e. healthcare personnel, international travelers and students at post-high school education institutions) with a minimum interval of 28 days from the first dose to the second dose;
 - One or more doses of measles-containing vaccine administered on or after the first birthday for children ages 1 – 4 years and adults not at high risk; or
 - Laboratory evidence of immunity (positive serum measles IgG); or
 - Laboratory confirmation of disease.
- **Consider measles as a diagnosis in anyone with fever ($\geq 101^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 38.3°C) and a generalized maculopapular rash with cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis especially those with recent travel to or from areas with known measles outbreaks.**
 - **DO NOT** allow patients with suspected measles to remain in the waiting room or other common areas of the facility.
 - **NOTIFY** the emergency room if a suspected measles case needs to be sent to a hospital so that appropriate infection control precautions can be implemented upon arrival.
- **Immediately report patients with suspected measles to the Local Health Department (LHD) where the patient resides. Erie County residents should be reported to the ECDOH Office of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance at (716) 858-7697. If after business hours, a telephone number to contact ECDOH on-call staff is provided in the voice mail recording.**
- **Call the ECDOH when considering measles testing at (716) 858-7697.** Testing includes the collection of either a nasopharyngeal swab (NP) or oropharyngeal (OP) swab using VTM/UTM for RT-PCR, as well as blood serology (IgM and IgG). The swab should be sterile dacron or rayon with plastic or flexible metal handles. These are the same types of swabs and media used for influenza and COVID-19 PCR testing. DO NOT use cotton or calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden sticks. Urine may also contain virus so a urine sample should be collected in addition when feasible. Use of commercial laboratories for measles testing may take up to a week to obtain results. Reporting suspected cases of measles to the LHD enables access to rapid testing through the NYS Wadsworth Center Laboratory. The LHD can assist in arranging specimen collection and testing at the Wadsworth Center Laboratory.
 - Measles test collection kits (include swab outfit with transport media) are available from NYSDOH. Providers can order these kits by calling the NYSDOH Wadsworth Center Order Desk at (518) 474-4175.
- Refer to the below “**RESOURCES**” for additional information.



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MEASLES VACCINE RECOMMENDATIONS (American Academy of Pediatrics Redbook 2024-2027)

Vaccination is the cornerstone of measles prevention. All children should receive measles vaccination as part of the routine childhood vaccine schedule. Unimmunized or incompletely immunized children should begin catch-up vaccination as soon as possible. During an outbreak, MMR vaccine should be offered to all people with known exposure or in the outbreak community who lack evidence of measles immunity. During a community-wide outbreak that affects infants, MMR vaccine has been shown to be effective in preventing symptoms after exposure and may be recommended for infants 6 through 11 months of age. Children who receive their first MMR prior to 12 months of age will require two additional doses after 12 months of age for full protection.

Unimmunized or no history of measles (12 through 15 months of age)

- MMR or MMRV vaccine is recommended at 12 through 15 months of age; a second dose is recommended at least 28 days after the first dose (or 90 days for MMRV) and usually is administered at 4 through 6 years of age.

Children 6 through 11 months of age in outbreak situations or before international travel

- Immunize with MMR vaccine, ideally at least 2 weeks prior to travel, but this dose is not considered valid, and 2 valid doses on or after the first birthday are required. MMRV should not be administered to children < 12 months of age.

Students in kindergarten, elementary, middle, high school, and college/postsecondary institutions who have received 1 dose of measles vaccine at 12 months of age or older

- Administer the second dose of vaccine.

Adults unsure of their measles vaccine status

- Since it may be difficult to obtain childhood immunization records, a practical strategy endorsed by the **American College of Physicians** is to immunize all adults born after 1956.

WHAT TO DO IF MEASLES IS SUSPECTED

Do Not allow suspect case to sit in your waiting room.

Ask prior to entrance into medical facility:

- Symptoms: fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis lasting 2 – 4 days before rash onset
- Has the ill person been in contact with a measles case?
- Has the ill person traveled to an area where there is measles?



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Call the Local Health Department for guidance. In Erie County, please call (716) 858-7697. If after business hours, a telephone number to contact ECDOH on-call staff is provided in the voice mail recording.

RESOURCES

CDC

General Measles Information:

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

Measles Vaccine Recommendations (including PEP recommendations):

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/vaccine-considerations/index.html>

Measles Cases and Outbreak Data:

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

NYSDOH

Measles Health Advisory from February 25, 2025:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/measles/providers/docs/2025-02-26_health_advisory.pdf

NYS Wadsworth Center Laboratory's Measles Tip Sheet (Measles specimen collection, packaging, and shipping instructions):

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/providers/measles/docs/testing_collection.pdf

Measles Information for Healthcare Providers:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/measles/providers/>

ECDOH

General Measles Information:

<https://www3.erie.gov/health/measles-rubeola>

American College Physicians

American College Physicians Task Force on Adult Immunization and Infectious Diseases Society of America. Guide for adult immunization. Philadelphia. American College of Physicians, 1994.

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention



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Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary

The Erie County Department of Health does not provide medical advice. The information provided on the Erie County Department of Health website is not an attempt to practice medicine and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It is for informational purposes only. Always seek the advice of your personal physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or issue. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of the content found on the Erie County Department of Health website or this correspondence.

The ECDOH Health Alert & Advisory System is an e-mail notification system designed to alert community partners about important health related information. [Sign up to receive alerts & advisories.](#)