



## CDC stresses importance of measles vaccination as cases reported in U.S.

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Health officials are calling on pediatricians to make sure patients are up to date on measles vaccines and to consider measles when evaluating patients with a fever and rash.

The call from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) comes as [55 cases have been reported in the U.S.](#) this year including an ongoing outbreak in [Ohio](#).

The CDC advises health care providers to

- Consider measles in patients with fever and rash and other symptoms like cough, runny nose or conjunctivitis, especially if the person recently traveled internationally or was exposed to a person with fever and rash.
- Promptly isolate patients with suspected measles and report suspected cases to the local or state health department.
- Obtain specimens for testing from patients with suspected measles, including viral specimens for genotyping.

Measles vaccines are highly effective at preventing illness from one of the most contagious human viruses. Children should receive their first dose of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine between 12 and 15 months of age and a second dose between 4 and 6 years. If traveling abroad, infants ages 6 months through 11 months should have one dose of MMR, and children 12 months and older should receive two doses at least 28 days apart, [according to the CDC](#).

While [nearly 94% of U.S. kindergartners](#) had received two doses of MMR during the 2020-'21 school year, some communities have lower rates that can leave children vulnerable to infection. Measles can result in complications like pneumonia, brain damage and deafness, and can be fatal.

Last year, nearly 40 million children worldwide missed a measles vaccine dose, according to a joint study from the CDC and World Health Organization published in a recent [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#). First dose coverage was 81%, the lowest since 2008. There were about 9 million measles cases and 128,000 deaths worldwide.

“The record number of children under-immunized and susceptible to measles shows the profound damage immunization systems have sustained during the COVID-19 pandemic,” CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, M.D., said in a [press release](#). “Measles outbreaks illustrate weaknesses in immunization programs, but public health officials can use outbreak response to identify communities at risk, understand causes of under-vaccination, and help deliver locally tailored solutions to ensure vaccinations are available to all.”

## Resources

- [Information about measles outbreaks from Red Book Online](#)
- [AAP Red Book chapter on measles](#)
- [CDC's measles webpage for health care providers](#)
- [CDC measles fact sheet](#)
- [AAP clinical report \*Countering Vaccine Hesitancy\*](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on protecting children during measles outbreaks](#)