



California child dies from measles-related complications

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A school-age child in California [died of complications](#) from a measles infection acquired during infancy, according to health officials in Los Angeles County.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health said the child was infected with measles before being eligible to receive a measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, the first dose of which typically is given at around 1 year of age.

The child recovered from the initial measles illness but developed and died from subacute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE), a rare but universally fatal complication that can occur in individuals who had measles early in life.

SSPE is a progressive brain disorder that usually develops two to 10 years after the patient seems to be fully recovered from the initial measles infection. It is characterized by a gradual and worsening loss of neurological function with death occurring one to three years after diagnosis. There is no cure or effective treatment.

SSPE affects about one in 10,000 people with measles, but the risk may be much higher (about one in 600) for those who get measles as infants.

“This case is a painful reminder of how dangerous measles can be, especially for our most vulnerable community members,” Los Angeles County Health Officer Muntu Davis, M.D., M.P.H., said in a statement. “Infants too young to be vaccinated rely on all of us to help protect them through community immunity.”

Vaccination is not just about protecting yourself — it’s about protecting your family, your neighbors, and especially children who are too young to be vaccinated.”

So far this year, 20 measles cases have been [confirmed](#) throughout the state, according to the California Department of Public Health.

[Two school-aged children](#) died during a large measles outbreak this year in Texas, which included 762 confirmed cases and 99 hospitalizations. Last month, health officials in Texas [declared](#) the state’s measles outbreak to be over.

As of Sept. 9, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported 1,454 confirmed measles cases throughout the United States, the highest number in the country in the last 25 years. More than 92% of the total cases involve unvaccinated individuals or individuals whose vaccine status is unknown.

The AAP and CDC recommend ensuring patients are covered with a two-dose MMR vaccination series. Under [routine recommendations](#), the doses are given at ages 12-15 months and 4-6 years. One dose of MMR is 93% effective against measles, and two doses are 97% effective.

The outbreaks come as studies show [declining rates](#) of MMR vaccination among kindergartners and the rampant spread of misinformation about the safety of vaccines.

Resource

[Information about SSPE from HealthyChildren.org](#)

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