



## Measles FAQs

Last Updated Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### 1. What is Measles?

Measles is a virus-caused illness that can easily spread from person to person. It is serious for babies, young children, and those with weakened immune systems. Children can develop complications from the virus, such as pneumonia and brain swelling. In the United States, one in five people who get infected may be hospitalized.

[Link](#)

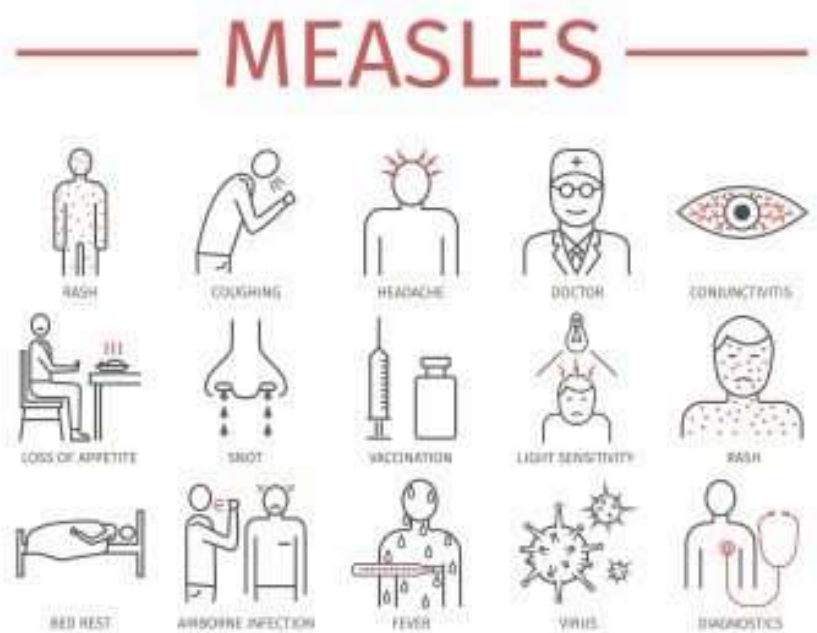
### 2. Where have there been cases of Measles?

There have currently been **six hundred and forty four** diagnosed cases in West Texas. Case counts are **3** in Andrews, **2** in Bailey, **1** in Borden, **1** in Brown, **14** in Cochran, **7** in Dallam, **25** in Dawson, **10** in Ector, **22** in El Paso, **1** in Erath, **393** in Gaines, **2** in Garza, **5** in Hale, **5** in Hockley, **14** in

Lamar, **1** in Lamb, **47** in Lubbock, **2** in Lynn, **3** in Martin, **3** in Midland, **4** in Parmer, **1** in Potter, **1** in Randall, **1** in Reeves, **59** in Terry, and **19** in Yoakum. There has been **two** death in the outbreak in Texas. **Twenty nine** other cases have been diagnosed, separate from the outbreak in west Texas. There have not been diagnosed cases in the state since 2023. Along with this outbreak, there is a connected outbreak in New Mexico in the counties that borders these counties in Texas. The current case counts are Lea with **61** cases and **1** death, and, Chaves with **1** case, Dona Ana with **1** case, Eddy with **3** cases. A third state has been added to the current outbreak in Oklahoma with unknown counties involved but with **15** cases reported.

There were 284 cases in the United States, affecting 32 states and jurisdictions. There were 16 classified outbreaks (3 or more related cases).

### 3. How is it spread?





Measles is very contagious and is spread through the air by a person coughing and sneezing. It can be passed in a room within a 2-hour period of the person being in the room.

#### 4. Signs and Symptoms

Measles symptoms can appear between 7 to 14 days of exposure.

- High Fever, usually with spikes up to 104 degrees
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red and watery eyes
- Conjunctivitis
- Koplik's Spots
  - Tiny white spot with bluish-white centers found inside the mouth on the inner lining of the cheek
  - 2-3 days after symptoms start
- Rash
  - Large, Flat blotches
  - Usually starts within 3-5 days after symptoms
  - Rash may begin at the hairline and move to the face and neck
- Complications from the virus
  - Ear Infections
  - Diarrhea
  - Encephalitis
  - Hospitalization
  - Death

[Link](#)



#### 5. Prevention

The best form of protection from the virus is two doses of the MMR vaccine.

[Vaccines](#)



## 6. Treatment/Supportive Care

There is no specific treatment for measles. The suggested is to treat symptoms, relieve discomfort, and prevent complications.

- Rest
- Fluids
- Fever reducers
- Vitamin A
- Antibiotics for secondary infection
- Humidifier
- Gargling with Salt Water
- Dim Lights

[Treatment](#)

## 7. Testing

There are four suggestions for testing. There is a nasal swab, throat swab, blood, or urine specimen. The preferred method is for a nasal or throat swab.

## 8. How can I protect myself and my family from Measles?

The best way to protect against measles is with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. MMR is safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.

**Protect High-Risk Groups:** Individuals with weakened immune systems (e.g., due to chemotherapy or certain medical conditions), older adults, and very young children need extra caution to avoid exposure.

**Stay Home If You Are Ill:** If you develop symptoms, isolate at home and consult a healthcare professional to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

**Wash Hands Frequently:** Regular handwashing with soap and water helps minimize the spread of infectious diseases.



## **9. What should I do if I suspect I have been exposed to Measles?**

Immediately call your healthcare provider and let them know that you have been exposed to someone who has measles. Your healthcare provider can:

- Determine if you are immune to measles based on your vaccination record, age, or laboratory evidence.
- Make special arrangements to evaluate you, if needed, without putting other patients and medical office staff at risk.

## **10. How long does the Measles vaccine take to become effective?**

For the measles vaccine to work, the body needs time to produce protective antibodies in response to the vaccine. Detectable antibodies generally appear within just a few days after vaccination. People are usually fully protected after about 2 or 3 weeks. If you're traveling internationally, get up to date on all your measles shots. You should plan to be fully vaccinated at least 2 weeks before you depart. If your trip is less than 2 weeks away and you're not protected against measles, you should still get a dose of the measles vaccine.

## **11. What if my MMR vaccine is incomplete – do I need to restart the 2-dose series?**

If you were born after 1957, one dose of the measles vaccine is sufficient to be considered protected from measles. Confident adults may need two doses. Adults who will be in a setting that poses a high risk for measles transmission should ensure they have had two doses separated by at least 28 days. These adults include:

- Students at post-high school education institutions
- Healthcare personnel
- International travelers
- People who public health authorities determine are at increased risk for getting measles during a measles outbreak

If you're unsure whether you are up to date on the measles vaccine, talk with your healthcare provider.



## **12. What should I do if someone in my household is diagnosed with Measles?**

Suppose someone in your household is diagnosed with Measles. In that case, you should immediately contact your doctor and local health department, isolate the infected person in a separate room, and ensure everyone else in the household who is not immune to measles gets vaccinated as soon as possible, ideally within 72 hours of exposure; also, practice good hygiene and avoid close contact with vulnerable individuals like pregnant women and immunocompromised people.

## **13. Where can I stay informed about the latest updates regarding the Measles spread?**

Local Health Department, CDC, and DSHS.

## **14. Does a mask protect me from Measles?**

Yes, wearing a mask can help protect you from Measles.

## **15. Should I wear a mask to prevent the spread to others if I am exposed?**

Yes, if you are exposed to measles, you should wear a mask to prevent spreading the virus to others, especially if you are around people who are not vaccinated or are at high risk; the CDC recommends this as a key measure to limit transmission until you can get vaccinated or confirm your immunity status.

## **16. If I received a 2-dose series over 20 years ago, can I get a booster if I am high-risk?**

Some people who are already up to date on their MMR vaccination may be recommended to get an additional dose for added protection against disease. Your local public health authorities or institution will communicate to the groups at increased risk that they should receive this dose. If you already have two doses of MMR, it is not necessary to seek vaccination unless you are part of this group.

## **17. Are hospitals and clinics safe to visit?**

The CDC recommends screening visitors, limiting visitors, and isolating patients with measles. If it is necessary to visit a clinic or hospital, proper precautions should be taken, such as wearing a mask and hand washing.



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**18. Additional Resource**

[CDC Measles Cases and Outbreak](#)

[CDC Measles](#)

[Cleveland Clinic Measles](#)

[Texas Department of State Health Services Measles Communication Toolkit](#)

[St. Jude Measles](#)