



Hawai'i State Department of Health

Disease Outbreak Control Division

Measles Toolkit for School Settings- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is ONE dose of MMR vaccine enough protection against measles?

- One dose of MMR vaccine is 93% effective against measles (for adults).
- Two doses of MMR vaccine adequately spaced apart are 97% effective at preventing measles (1st dose after 12 months of age and 2nd dose between ages 4-6 years old).

When should I go to the ER for measles?

- Contact your healthcare provider if you think you have measles and before your symptoms have become worse. Don't wait, seek medical care.
- Seek ER care if:
 - If you are having a hard time breathing or breathing faster than normal
 - If you are experiencing signs of severe dehydration (dry nose and mouth, less urination than usual)
 - Confusion, decreased alertness or severe weakness
 - For young children: a blue color around the mouth, crying without making tears, unusually low energy or severe loss of appetite.
 - **** IMPORTANT:** Have someone call the ER to let them know a person with measles is coming in so they can see you away from other patients**
- If your child attends childcare, consult your healthcare provider says it's okay to return. This prevents spread to others.

What do I do if I am “exposed to someone exposed with measles” or “think I have an active measles infection?”

- Immediately call your healthcare provider and explain your situation.
- If you think you have been exposed to someone with measles, please let your healthcare provider know.
- 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.
 - Can inquire if you are eligible and meet the criteria to receive post-

exposure treatment.

What should I do, if a healthcare provider or someone from the health department told me “I have measles?”

- Stay home for four days after you develop the rash. Staying home is an important way to not spread measles to other people.
- Ask your healthcare provider when it is safe to be around other people again.
- Wear a mask if you must leave your house
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in the trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs, tables, and counters. Standard household disinfectants will readily kill the measles virus.

How long does the measles virus live in the environment?

- Measles virus can change quickly in the environment and easily inactivated on a dry surface therefore it cannot be spread by fomites (objects or materials which can carry infection such as clothes, utensils, furniture). The virus loses its ability to cause illness after two hours in the air or on surfaces.
- Use [EPA-registered disinfectants](#) with demonstrated efficacy against respiratory pathogens

Should I get a booster?

- People who have had two doses of measles vaccine do NOT need a booster. Complete immunity is obtained through receiving two adequately spaced doses of measles vaccine as a child or one dose as an adult born after 1957. No additional dose of MMR vaccine is recommended routinely for those born before 1957 because they are assumed to have had measles infection.

What if I was born after 1957?

- One dose of measles vaccine is sufficient to be considered protected from measles. Certain adults may need 2 doses.

How long does it take to show signs of measles if I was infected?

- For measles, there is an average of 10 to 12 days from exposure to the appearance of the first symptom, which is usually fever.
- The measles rash doesn't usually appear until approximately 14 days after exposure (range: 7 to 21 days), and the rash typically begins 2 to 4 days after the fever begins.

Given the risk of outbreaks of measles in the U.S., should all healthcare personnel, including those born before 1957, have 2 doses of MMR vaccine?

- Although birth before 1957 is considered acceptable evidence of measles immunity for routine vaccination, healthcare facilities should consider vaccinating unvaccinated healthcare personnel (HCP) born before 1957 who do not have laboratory evidence of measles immunity, laboratory confirmation of disease, or vaccination with 2 appropriately spaced doses of MMR vaccine.
- However, during a local outbreak of measles, all healthcare personnel, including those born before 1957, are recommended to have 2 doses of MMR vaccine at the appropriate interval if they lack laboratory evidence of measles.

What if I don't have insurance or a provider and want to get vaccinated?

- For a listing of Community Health Centers and Federally Qualified Healthcare Clinics (FQHC) visit: [Health Centers Here for You — Hawai'i Primary Care Association](#)
- Refer to FQHC separate link on [measles webpage](#) under "Information for schools" section

Who is not eligible to receive the MMR vaccine?

It is not recommended for the following people:

- People who have had a severe allergic reaction after a previous dose or to a vaccine component
- People who have a known severe immunodeficiency
- Pregnant women

If 1960's killed measles vaccine was received, is revaccination necessary?

- Discuss with your healthcare provider about getting revaccinated with current, live measles- mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Are there additional precautions if a confirmed measles case lives in a household with a person who has a weakened immune system?

- Please consult your healthcare provider for additional guidance.

Can someone get measles more than once?

No.

What if I am uncertain of my vaccination status?

- Please consult your healthcare provider for additional guidance.

What are reliable sources of immunization information for parents to find answers?

- Refer to “Additional resources” section page 24 of 26

How common is measles in the United States?

- Before the vaccine was licensed in 1963, there were an estimated 3–4 million cases each year. In the years following 1963, the number of measles cases dropped to 1,497 cases in 1983, the lowest annual total reported up to that time. By 2004, only 37 cases were reported. Subsequently, a record number of measles cases occurred in 2019 when 1,249 cases and 22 outbreaks were reported in the United States. A majority of the cases (85%) occurred in under immunized, close-knit communities.
- During the time period of January 1, 2025–August 19, 2025, CDC was notified of 1375 confirmed measles cases in 42 jurisdictions. There have been 35 outbreaks (defined as 3 or more related cases) reported in 2025, and 87% of confirmed cases (1,190 of 1,375) are outbreak-associated.
- For comparison, 16 outbreaks were reported during 2024 and 69% of cases (198 of 285) were outbreak-associated. In 2025, there has been 3 confirmed deaths from measles compared to no deaths during 2024. For up-to-date case counts and outbreak information, visit CDC’s Measles Cases and Outbreaks web page at www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html.