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Contact: ODH Office of Communications 614-644-8562

Health Director Announces Measles Case in Ohio

Dr. Vanderhoff emphasizes importance of getting vaccinated

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) -- Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, has reported the state's first measles case of 2025. The infected adult is from Ashtabula County. The individual was unvaccinated and had contact with someone who had recently travelled internationally.

ODH is working with the Ashtabula County Health Department to follow up on potential exposures and to promote opportunities for vaccination.

“The fact that we now have a measles case in Ohio adds emphasis to the importance of being fully vaccinated,” Dr. Vanderhoff said. “This disease can be very serious, but it is preventable. I strongly encourage you to protect yourselves and your children by getting vaccinated.”

Ohio had 90 cases of measles in 2022, when an outbreak centered in Central Ohio totaled 85 cases. The state had one measles case in 2023 and seven in 2024.

Measles prevalence has been increasing recently internationally and there are ongoing outbreaks in Texas and New Mexico.

Measles is extremely contagious and can spread to others through coughing and sneezing. It can be brought back to the United States, and Ohio, by individuals who travel. If people are not protected against the disease, 9 out of 10 people who are exposed will become ill.

The measles vaccine (called MMR as it protects against measles, mumps and rubella) is very safe and effective at preventing measles. Two doses of MMR is 97% effective against measles. If you are up to date on measles vaccine, the risk of getting sick is very low.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends all children get two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 through 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age.

MMR vaccine can also be given to adults born after 1957 who are not vaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown.

Dr. Vanderhoff on Tuesday held a news conference to discuss Ohio's childhood immunization rates and to urge parents to get their children up to date on all recommended vaccines, including the MMR vaccine, in light of the measles outbreaks in some states.

You can find the [video of that news conference on the ODH YouTube channel](#).

The measles virus can live for up to two hours in air where an infected person coughed or sneezed. If other people breathe the contaminated air or touch an infected surface and then touch their eyes, noses, or mouths, they can become infected. People infected with measles can spread it to others from four days before, through four days after, a rash appears.

Measles symptoms include a rash, high fever, runny nose, cough, loss of appetite and red, watery eyes. The rash usually lasts 5-6 days and begins at the hairline, moves to the face and upper neck, and proceeds down the body. Diarrhea and ear infections are common complications of measles. More severe complications may also occur.

Complications from measles are more common among children younger than 5 years of age, adults older than 20 years of age, pregnant women, and people with compromised immune systems. As many as one out of every 20 children with measles gets pneumonia, the most common cause of death from measles in young children.

More information about measles is available on the CDC website, including [general information](#) and the [recommended immunization schedule](#). ODH also has a [measles FAQ page](#).

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About the Ohio Department of Health

The Ohio Department of Health's mission is advancing the health and well-being of all Ohioans. ODH is transforming the state's public health system through unique partnerships and funding streams; addressing the community conditions and inequities that lead to disparities in health outcomes; and implementing data-driven, evidence-based solutions.