



North Andover Health Department
Community and Economic Development Division

Current Measles outbreaks throughout the U.S.

Date: May 5, 2025

Dear North Andover Residents,

The North Andover Health Department/Board of Health is closely watching and monitoring the current measles outbreaks throughout the U.S and especially in the state of Texas. The Health Department is also in direct communications with our Public Health partners at the State of Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) -Epidemiology Division and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The Health Department/Board of Health at this time, is providing current MDPH and CDC measles information on how to protect you and your loved ones. The Health Department strongly recommends measles vaccination along with other preventative measures listed below. The Health Department will be reaching out to our local schools, day cares, child care, churches and other affiliated local organizations in working with and sharing this information.

Measles is a very highly contagious respiratory illness caused by a virus found in the nose and throat of an infected child or adult. When someone with measles coughs, sneezes or talks, infectious droplets spray into the air, where other people can breathe them in. The infectious droplets can hang in the air for about an hour. The infectious droplets may also land on a surface, where they can live and spread for several hours. You can get the measles virus by putting your fingers in your mouth or nose or rubbing your eyes after touching the infected surface.

Measles is highly contagious from about four days before to four days after the rash appears. About 90% of people who haven't had measles or been vaccinated against measles will become infected when exposed to someone with the measles virus.

FACTS

- Measles is the most contagious respiratory virus world wide
- 10.3 million reported cases world wide
- Measles was declared eliminated from the U.S. in 2000 (UK and other countries have not thus travel contributes to bringing measles to the U.S.)
- About 1 in 5 unvaccinated people in the U.S. who get measles are hospitalized.
- Nearly 1 in 3 of every 1,000 children who become infected with measles will die from respiratory and neurologic complications.

VACCINATION DATA

- After one dose of vaccine- 93% protected
- After 2 doses of vaccine- 97% protected

CURRENT OUTBREAKS IN THE US

- 30 States currently affected. (Closest to MA is NY, RI and VT)
- 935 total current cases, 121 have been hospitalized and 3 fatalities.
- 96% of the 935 are either not vaccinated or their vaccination status is unknown > 2% of the 935 have received 1 dose and 2% have received both doses

WHAT IS CONTRIBUTING TO THE OUTBREAKS?

- Vaccination rates among kindergarteners is now below the 95% coverage target—much lower in some communities—and is decreasing.
- Global measles activity is increasing, meaning more chances of an unvaccinated person infected with measles abroad returning to the United States.
- There is an increase in exemptions (medical and religious) to forgo vaccines.

HOW CAN FAMILIES PROTECT THEMSELVES?

- Talk to your physician about getting vaccinated.
- If you are planning any International Travel, it is HIGHLY advisable to get vaccinated at least 2 weeks prior to leaving.
- Call your physician immediately for any new rashes, fevers, odd white spots inside the mouth.