

Measles Prevention & Vaccination: Messaging Toolkit

February 2026

This document is meant for schools and child care providers to help share messages with parents and families about how to prevent the spread of measles.

Please find sample newsletter posts, social media posts, and print resources such as fact sheets (translated) and posters to help share important measles prevention messaging. You will also find background information, key facts about measles, and guidance on what will happen if there is a case in your school community.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact ahs.vdhvaccineprevepi@vermont.gov.

Table of Contents

Background.....	1
Key Facts about Measles.....	1
Sources of Information	2
What will happen if there is a case of measles?.....	2
How to Use this Toolkit.....	3
Sample Newsletter Post or Letter/Email to Parents.....	4
Sample Social Media Posts	5
Printable Resources: Factsheets, Poster and Vaccine Schedule	8

Background

Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. and the region. Most cases reported are among children and teens who are unvaccinated. [Get current information about measles cases and outbreaks \(CDC\)](#).

Stay up to date about measles activity in Vermont at HealthVermont.gov/measles.

Key Facts about Measles

- **Measles is not just a little rash.** It can be dangerous, especially in children younger than 5 years old. About 1 in 5 unvaccinated people in the U.S. who get measles are hospitalized.



HealthVermont.gov
802-863-7200



- **Measles is one of the most contagious diseases.** An infected person will spread measles to about 9 out of 10 people they come into contact with who are not vaccinated. The virus can spread to other people when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can stay in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area. People can become infected if they breathe in the germs or touch a contaminated surface and then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- **Measles is almost entirely preventable with vaccines.** While most people in the U.S. and Vermont are vaccinated against measles, communities with lower vaccine coverage are at higher risk for outbreaks.
 - According to 2024-2025 school immunization survey data, 94% of children in Vermont public and independent schools are fully vaccinated against measles before entering kindergarten. This data doesn't include children who are homeschooled or not yet enrolled in school.
 - Because measles is so contagious, 95% of a population needs to be immune to limit the spread of the virus effectively.
- The measles vaccine is the best defense against measles. It's part of the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine or "MMR." Two vaccine doses are 97% effective against measles (one dose is 93% effective).
- **Measles is still common in many parts of the world.** Every year, measles is brought into the U.S. by unvaccinated travelers who get measles while they are in other countries.

Sources of Information

Dangerous falsehoods and myths may be spreading about measles, including how to prevent and treat it. It can be hard to know what's true, and what's not true. We recommend sources of information such as:

- Health care providers and pharmacists
- HealthVermont.gov/measles
- VaccinateYourFamily.org
- HealthyChildren.org
- VaccineInformation.org
- [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Vaccine Education Center](https://www.childrenshospital.org/vaccine-education-center)
- CDC.gov/measles

What will happen if there is a case of measles?

When someone tests positive for measles, or if measles is highly suspected by a health care provider, the Health Department will work collaboratively with their health care provider and with facilities where exposures may have occurred. Here's what you may expect:

- **Anyone confirmed to have measles** will stay home from work/school/child care and away from other people until they are cleared to return by a health professional and are no longer able to spread the measles virus to others.
- Someone with measles can spread the virus to others even **before knowing they are sick**. Measles can spread to others from four days before through four days after the rash appears. If they attended school/work during their infectious period, the Health Department will reach out to their school/work to determine who may have been exposed to measles.
- For children and adults who were **exposed** to measles, and **who do not have protection** against measles:
 - They should be kept out of work/school/child care for several weeks during their incubation period – the time it may take for measles symptoms to develop in someone who is not protected against measles. The duration of time for exclusion depends on several factors, but it could be as long as three or four weeks.
 - The Health Department will provide postexposure vaccine when appropriate.
 - The Health Department will follow up every day with each person during their symptom monitoring period to check for development of any measles symptoms.
- Children and adults who were **exposed**, but who **do have protection** against measles:
 - They may attend school/child care and work, but will be asked to monitor themselves for symptoms. The duration of time for symptom monitoring depends on several factors, but it could be for up to three weeks. People with certain health conditions may be given additional guidance for measles prevention.
- The Health Department will stay in contact with people who are staying home and away from others, providing guidance and coordinating support with things like getting groceries or medicines, if needed.
- The Health Department will keep health care providers, partners, and the public informed as necessary to protect public health while maintaining people's privacy. In some cases, facility names may need to be shared with the public if there is concern around widespread exposures.

How to Use this Toolkit

The Vermont Department of Health needs your help to ensure families are fully vaccinated against measles. It's particularly important if families plan to travel outside of the U.S.

Please share these sample communication resources on measles and vaccinations with your parents, caregivers and staff. You can customize them as needed for your newsletters, email lists, mailings and other communication channels.

Sample Newsletter Post or Letter/Email to Parents

How to use: Please customize as needed and add to your newsletter, email list, or other communication channel to help promote measles vaccination. Or share this as a letter with parents and caregivers by copying and pasting it onto letterhead or in an email message.

U.S. Measles Cases are Rising—Make Sure Your Family is Protected

Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. and in the region. Most cases have been in children and teens who are unvaccinated against measles. [Get current information about cases and outbreaks \(CDC\).](#)

Measles is not just a little rash. Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. Some may suffer from severe complications, such as pneumonia (infection of the lungs) and encephalitis (swelling of the brain). Nearly 1 to 3 of every 1,000 children who become infected with measles will die from respiratory and neurologic complications.

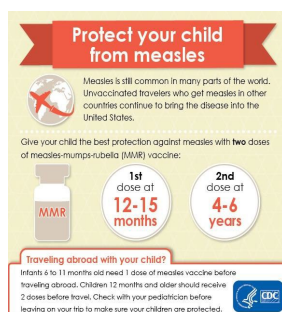
Measles is almost entirely preventable with vaccines. While most people in the U.S. and Vermont are vaccinated against measles, communities with lower vaccine coverage are at higher risk for outbreaks. Vaccinating your family protects other children from measles who can't get vaccinated because they are too young or have medical conditions. Being vaccinated against measles is your best defense against measles.

Here's how you can help keep your family, school, and community healthy:

- 1. Make sure you and your family are vaccinated against measles—especially if you plan to travel outside of the U.S.** Measles is still common in many parts of the world. Every year, measles is brought into the U.S. by unvaccinated travelers who get measles while they are in other countries.
 - Children should get two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine—the first dose at 12-15 months and the second dose at 4-6 years.
 - Babies 6-11 months old who are traveling internationally should get an early dose of the MMR vaccine at least two weeks before travel.
- 2. If your child is sick with measles symptoms, stay home and call your doctor.**
 - Symptoms usually start with a high fever, then a cough, runny nose, and red and watery eyes. A rash usually appears three to five days after the first symptoms.

- If you do not have a health care provider, call 2-1-1 to be connected to care.
- If you suspect measles, make sure to **call before** going to a doctor's office, the hospital, or a clinic to let them know about symptoms. Because the virus is so contagious, the office will need to take precautions before you arrive.
- While there is no treatment for measles, your doctor will have the best guidance on how to care for a child with measles.

For more information on measles and vaccines, visit HealthVermont.gov/measles. Thank you for taking steps to protect our community.




[Attach image above. [Click here to download image.](#)]

Sample Social Media Posts

How to use: Use the suggested post copy or customize as needed. Then, click on the links to download the graphic or video and add to your post.

Find more social media graphics at www.cdc.gov/measles/resources.

Suggested Post Copy	Link to Graphics and Videos
<p>Measles, one of the most contagious viruses, is on the rise in the U.S. An infected person will spread measles to about 9 out of 10 people they come into contact with who are not vaccinated.</p> <p>Thankfully, the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is highly effective at protecting your family against severe illness. Is your family up-to-date?</p> <p>Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/measles</p>	 <p>Click to download the image</p>

Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. and worldwide. Measles is not just a little rash. It can be dangerous, especially in children younger than five years old. Nearly 1 to 3 of every 1,000 children who become infected with measles will die from respiratory and neurologic complications.

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

Check to make sure your family is up-to-date, especially if you plan to travel outside of the U.S.

Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/measles

Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies & young children.



[Click to download the image](#)

Measles is still common in many parts of the world. Every year, measles is brought into the U.S. by unvaccinated travelers who get measles while they are in other countries.

Make sure your family is up-to-date on the measles vaccines before traveling outside of the U.S.

Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/measles

Safeguard your family's travel plans with the measles vaccine.



[Click to download the image](#)

Measles cases are rising in the U.S. This highly contagious respiratory virus can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children.

Make sure you and your family are vaccinated against measles—especially children. This is particularly important if you plan to travel outside of the U.S.

Learn more: HealthVermont.gov/measles

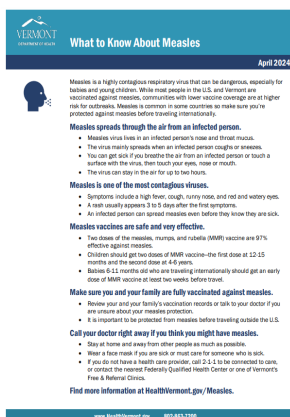


[Add this [CDC YouTube video](#) to your post and then add your post copy]

Printable Resources: Factsheets, Poster and Vaccine Schedule

How to use: Print to post or share these resources. Find more resources at www.cdc.gov/measles/resources.

"What to Know about Measles" Factsheet with Translations



[\[Click to translated factsheets\]](#)

Vaccine Poster



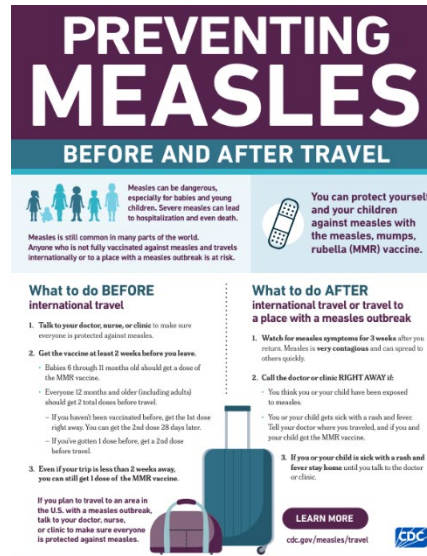
[\[Download poster\]](#)

"Measles isn't a sea creature" Poster



[\[Download poster\]](#)

"Preventing Measles Before and After Travel" Fact Sheet



[\[Download fact sheet\]](#)

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