

Measles Prevention & Vaccination: Messaging Toolkit

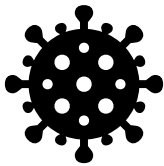
April 2026

Introduction

The Vermont Department of Health encourages you to help ensure families are protected against measles—especially before international travel. This toolkit includes ready-to-use messages and resources to help you share clear, accurate information with families. It also outlines what happens if there is measles in a setting like a school or child care program.

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

Top Messages



- Measles is highly contagious and can be serious, especially for young children
- Vaccination is the best way to protect your family
- Measles is still common globally and can spread through travel
- Make sure your family is up to date—especially before traveling outside the U.S.

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Key Facts

- **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.
- **Measles is one of the most contagious diseases.** If someone has measles, they will infect about 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people around them. The virus spreads through the air when a person coughs or sneezes, and can stay in the air for up to 2 hours after they leave.
- **Measles is almost entirely preventable with vaccines.** It's part of the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine or "MMR." Two vaccine doses are 97% effective against measles (one dose is 93% effective).
- **Most families in Vermont choose vaccination.** 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. Outbreaks are more likely in communities with lower vaccination rates.
- **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.

Recommended Sources of Information

There's a lot of information out there, and not all of it is accurate. Reliable information is based on research from trusted organizations. We recommend:



- HealthVermont.gov/Measles | [@healthvermont](https://twitter.com/healthvermont)
- VaccinateYourFamily.org | [@vaccinateyourfamily](https://twitter.com/vaccinateyourfamily)
- HealthyChildren.org | [@healthychildrenaap](https://twitter.com/healthychildrenaap)
- VaccineInformation.org | [@immunizeorg](https://twitter.com/immunizeorg)
- [Vaccine Education Center](https://VaccineEducationCenter.org) | [@childrensphila](https://twitter.com/childrensphila)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](https://AmericanAcademyofPediatrics.org) | [@ameracadped](https://twitter.com/ameracadped)

If There Is a Measles Case

When measles is confirmed or strongly suspected, the Health Department works collaboratively with the health care provider and any affected schools or child care programs to identify exposures and guide next steps.

People with measles:

- Stay home from work/school until they are cleared by a health professional
- The Health Department will contact their work/school to identify and notify anyone who may have been exposed during their infectious period
- Measles can spread from four days before to four days after the rash appears

People exposed **without** protection against measles (not vaccinated or no evidence of immunity):

- They should be kept out of work/school/child care during their incubation period – the time it may take for measles symptoms to develop. 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 post-exposure vaccine when appropriate
- The Health Department will follow up every day during their symptom monitoring period

People exposed **with** protection against measles (vaccinated or immune):

- Can continue normal activities
- 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

The Health Department will stay in contact with those affected, provide guidance, and help coordinate support if needed (like access to food or medicine). They will also keep providers, partners, and the public informed as needed—while protecting people’s privacy. If there is concern around widespread exposure, facility names may need to be shared publicly.

Sample Newsletter or Letter/Email to Parents

Make Sure Your Family Is Protected Against Measles

Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. and in the region. While most people in Vermont are protected, measles can spread quickly in communities with lower vaccination rates, and cases are often linked to international travel.

Measles Facts

- **Measles spreads very easily.** It travels through the air when a sick person coughs or sneezes. The virus can stay in a room for up to two hours after they leave.
- **Measles is not just a little rash.** It can cause pneumonia, brain swelling, and hospitalization. This is especially true for young children.
- **Vaccination is the best protection.** The MMR vaccine prevents measles and its complications. Getting measles is much riskier than getting the vaccine.

- **Some people depend on community protection.** Babies under 12 months and people with weakened immune systems may not be fully protected and rely on others to reduce spread.

How to Keep your Family, School, and Community Healthy

- **Make sure your children are vaccinated against measles.** Children should get two doses of MMR vaccine: 1st dose at 12–15 months and 2nd dose at 4–6 years.
Adults should also make sure they are protected. For guidance, visit HealthVermont.gov/measles#adults
- **If you plan to travel outside of the U.S.,** talk to your doctor about recommendations. Everyone 6 months and older (including adults) should be vaccinated before international travel, ideally at least two weeks before. When you and your family return home, watch for symptoms for three weeks.
- **If your child has symptoms,** stay home and call your doctor. Symptoms often 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. Make sure to call ahead before visiting a clinic.

Thank you for taking steps to protect our community. To learn more, visit HealthVermont.gov/Measles.

Sample Social Media Posts

Post #1: While most people in Vermont and the U.S. are vaccinated against measles, outbreaks still happen in local communities and parts of the world with lower vaccination rates. Everyone 6 months and older should be vaccinated against measles before traveling out of the country. Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/Measles

Post #2: Measles cases are on the rise in the U.S. and worldwide. This highly contagious virus can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. Luckily, infection is preventable thanks to the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/Measles

Post #3: Measles isn't just a childhood illness. Adults can get sick, too. Not sure if you're fully protected? Check your vaccination status—especially before traveling. Learn more: HealthVermont.gov/Measles

Post #4: Measles cases are rising in the U.S. and around the world. The good news? It's preventable. Make sure you and your family are up to date on vaccines. Learn more: HealthVermont.gov/Measles

Post #5: Protect your child from measles—one of the most contagious diseases. Two doses of the MMR vaccine offer strong protection and help keep your child, school, and community safe. Learn more: HealthVermont.gov/Measles

Graphics for Social Media and Newsletters



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Make sure you're protected against measles with the MMR vaccine – especially before traveling internationally!

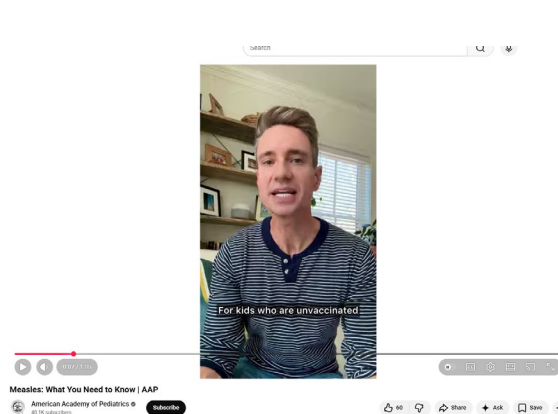
Routine childhood recommendation
 1st dose: **12–15 months old**
 2nd dose: **4–6 years old**

Traveling outside the United States? Everyone 6 months and older should be vaccinated against measles.
 Ideally, get vaccinated **at least two weeks before** your trip — but you can still get vaccinated even if your trip is less than two weeks away.

It's okay to have questions.
 Talk to your doctor to make sure your family, including the adults, are protected.

Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/Measles

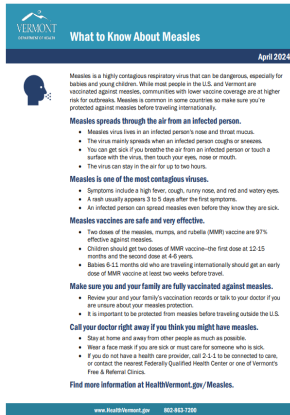
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“Measles: What you Need to Know” (AAP)

Add this [YouTube video](#) to your post

“What to Know about Measles” Factsheet with Translations



[Download translated factsheets](#)

Vaccine Poster



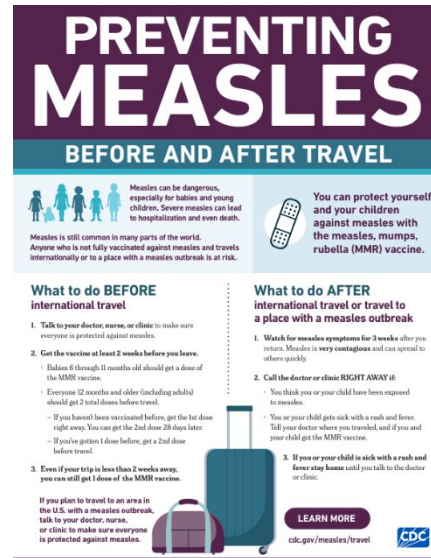
[Download poster](#)

“Measles isn’t a sea creature” Poster



[Download poster](#)

“Preventing Measles Before and After Travel” Fact Sheet



[Download fact sheet](#)
Available in multiple languages

Immunization Schedule (American Academy of Pediatrics)

AAP Recommended Immunization Schedule — 2026

Children Birth Through 6 Years Old

	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	8 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	19-23 months	2-3 years	4-6 years
RSV	✓	1 dose during RSV season				1 dose during RSV season for those at high risk*						
HepB	✓	✓			✓							
RV			✓	✓	✓							
DTaP			✓	✓	✓			✓				✓
Hib			✓	✓	✓		✓					
PCV			✓	✓	✓		✓					
IPV			✓	✓	✓							✓
COVID-19					✓	Recommended for age group					✓ As recommended	
Influenza					✓	Yearly						
MMR							✓					✓
Varicella							✓					✓
HepA							✓	Dose 2: 6 months after dose 1				

For more information, visit [healthychildren.org/immunizationschedules](https://www.healthychildren.org/immunizationschedules).

*<https://www.healthychildren.org/rsv>
**<https://www.healthychildren.org/covid-19>



[Download schedule: birth to 6 years old](#)

[Download schedule: 7-18 years old](#)

MMR Vaccine Recommendations for Children – Travel

Make sure you're protected against measles with the MMR vaccine – especially before traveling internationally!



Routine childhood recommendation

1st dose: **12–15 months old**
2nd dose: **4–6 years old**



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Talk to your doctor to make sure your family, including the adults, are protected.

Learn more at HealthVermont.gov/Measles



[Download PDF](#)

Translated Videos

From the Vermont Language Justice Project (VLJP): [measles videos translated into multiple languages](#)