

3/27/2025

Dear Parent or Guardian:

You are receiving this letter because Knox County has confirmed a positive measles case in an international traveler visiting our community. Please read on for additional information about symptoms, transmission and actions you can take to prevent the spread of this infectious disease.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) [Director's Journal Entry](#) requires two doses of measles vaccine for all pupils in grades kindergarten (K) – 12.

Please assist the local community by providing a copy of your child(ren)'s vaccination record(s) to the school if it is not already on file. Students who are unable to provide [evidence of immunity](#) are considered susceptible. In accordance with section 3313.671 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), any child in an affected school who cannot show proof of two (2) properly administered measles vaccinations shall be excluded from school attendance until such proof is provided. Children with written waivers or exemptions shall be excluded for 21 days after the onset of the last known case in the affected school.

Information about measles according to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH):

Incubation/Transmission:

- The MMR vaccine is safe and provides the best protection against measles virus infection. One dose is 93% effective and two doses are 97% effective at preventing measles infection.
- The incubation period can range from 7 to 21 days. Average symptom onset is 11 to 12 days after exposure with rash onset shortly after other symptoms, usually around day 14.
- Most measles cases in the United States have been associated with international travel, particularly among unvaccinated individuals. Measles is very contagious. If one person has it, 90% of those around them will also become infected if they are not protected by the MMR vaccination.
- The measles virus is spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The measles virus can live for up to two (2) hours in the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- People can become infected after breathing contaminated air or touching a contaminated surface and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Individuals infected with measles can spread the disease up to four (4) days before symptom onset through four (4) days after rash onset.

Symptoms:

- Measles symptoms include: high fever (may spike from 103-105° F), cough, severe intolerance to light for 2 to 4 days, runny nose, pink/red, watery eyes, and a red/brown blotchy rash. The rash will appear on the face then spread to trunk and then extremities. Rash and other symptoms usually subside in 7 to 9 days.

Severe measles cases:

- About one (1) out of every five (5) people who gets measles will be hospitalized.
- One (1) out of every 1,000 people with measles will develop brain swelling due to infection (encephalitis) which may lead to brain damage.
- 1 to 3 out of 1,000 people with measles will die, even with the best care.



Isolation:

- A person with measles shall be isolated, including exclusion from school or child care for four (4) days after rash onset returning school or child care on the fifth (5th) day following rash onset. Contagiousness may be longer for those with altered immunity.

Immunization:

- The MMR vaccine is safe and effective with both doses.
- Children should receive their first (1st) dose of measles vaccine between 12 and 15 months of age; another dose at 4 to 6 years of age. Measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine is generally first given at 12 months of age in the United States, but is sometimes recommended for children as young as six (6) months of age who are traveling outside the United States or could be infected in an outbreak. If vaccine is received prior to 12 months of age, two additional doses are still required on or after the first birthday.

Considerations:

- Any area where exposure occurred should not be used for at least two (2) hours after the positive individual is removed from the area. Regular household cleaners, such as Lysol or Clorox, will kill the measles virus on surfaces.

If you have questions regarding measles or the MMR vaccination or would like to schedule a vaccination appointment in the future, please contact your health care provider or the Public Health Nurse at 740-399-8003.

Please report any cases of measles to Knox Public Health **immediately** via telephone upon recognition that a case, suspected case, or positive lab result exists. (740-392-2200 ext. 2238 Starr Roden, Communicable Disease nurse; 740-392-2200 ext. 2311 David Hatley III, Epidemiologist, or 740-399-8003 Lisa Dudgeon, Director of Nursing/Communicable Disease Nurse).

Sincerely,

Lisa R. Dudgeon, RN
Public Health Outreach/Communicable Disease
Phone: 740-392-2200 ext. 2236
Fax: 740-392-5482

