



April 11, 2025

Measles Cases Confirmed in Arkansas

Two cases of measles have been confirmed in unimmunized Arkansas residents with out-of-state travel exposures. Measles is a highly contagious, vaccine preventable illness that can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, encephalitis, and death. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is issuing this Health Advisory to share measles guidance with clinicians.

Recommendations for Clinicians

- Consider the diagnosis of measles in any person with febrile illness and [clinically compatible symptoms](#) (e.g., rash, cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis), especially those who don't have [evidence of measles immunity](#) or have exposure risks:
 - Visited known [measles exposure locations in Arkansas](#) during timeframes noted
 - Recently traveled abroad, especially to [countries with ongoing measles outbreaks](#)
 - Recently traveled to [locations in the U.S. experiencing measles outbreaks](#)
 - Have other known or suspected exposure to measles
- Do not allow patients with suspected measles to remain in the waiting room or other common areas of the healthcare facility; **isolate patients with suspected measles immediately**, ideally in a single-patient airborne infection isolation room, if available.
- **Suspected cases of measles should be reported immediately to ADH at 501-661-2381 to ensure rapid testing and investigation.**
 - Please do not wait until laboratory results are available before reporting a suspect measles case.
- [CDC's measles testing recommendations](#) include collecting both a nasopharyngeal (or throat) swab for [measles RT-PCR](#) and a blood specimen for [measles serology](#) from all patients suspected of having measles.
 - Contact ADH at 501-661-2381 to discuss and coordinate measles specimen collection and laboratory submission.
 - Guidance for [measles specimen collection and submission](#) to the Arkansas State Public Health Laboratory is available.
- There is no specific antiviral therapy for measles. Medical care is supportive to help relieve symptoms and address complications such as bacterial infections.
 - [Treatment recommendations for measles among children](#), particularly those who are hospitalized with severe infection, may include vitamin A administered under a physician's supervision, as inappropriate use or dosing can lead to toxicity.

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- In coordination with ADH, [measles post-exposure prophylaxis \(PEP\)](#) should be provided to people exposed to measles who don't have evidence of immunity against measles.
 - [Evidence of immunity to measles](#) is defined as written documentation of adequate vaccination, laboratory evidence of immunity via serology, laboratory confirmed disease, or birth before 1957.
- Patients are infectious for 4 days before and 4 days after they develop a rash and isolation is recommended during this period; airborne precautions should be followed in healthcare settings.
 - Measles virus can live in the air for up to 2 hours after an infectious patient has left a shared air space.
 - Measles [infection prevention and control recommendations](#) are available.
- The best way to protect against measles is with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Ensure all patients are up to date on the [MMR vaccine](#) and other recommended vaccines per CDC/ACIP recommendations.
 - For people traveling abroad or to [locations in the U.S. experiencing measles outbreaks](#), CDC recommends that all U.S. residents older than 6 months be protected from measles and receive the MMR vaccine, if needed, prior to departure.
 - As of 4/11/25, Arkansas does not meet the definition of a measles outbreak.

For More Information

- Please contact ADH (501-661-2381) with any questions or concerns.
- [Measles \(Rubeola\) Arkansas Department of Health](#)
- [Health Alert Network \(HAN\) - 00522 | Expanding Measles Outbreak in the United States and Guidance for the Upcoming Travel Season](#)
- [Measles \(Rubeola\) | CDC](#)
- [Clinical Overview of Measles: Diagnosis, Laboratory Testing, and Outbreak Response \(CDC Web on Demand Video\)](#)
- [Measles | Red Book: 2024–2027 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases | Red Book Online | American Academy of Pediatrics](#)