

Losing Measles Elimination Status Puts American Families at Risk

The U.S. losing its measles elimination status means declining vaccination rates allowed for sustained community transmission over a 12-month period.



WHY THIS IS BAD FOR AMERICANS

Measles is one of the most contagious viruses. It hospitalizes children and adults, causes pneumonia and brain swelling and can be deadly.¹ Before vaccines were available, measles infected **3-4 million** Americans each year, leading to nearly **50,000 hospitalizations** annually, with over **90% of children** contracting the disease before age 15.^{2,3}



Measles can compromise children's immune systems for years following infection, leaving them vulnerable and at-risk for other dangerous diseases.⁴



Adults over 20 are explicitly listed by CDC as a group at higher risk for complications.⁵

WHAT LOSING ELIMINATION STATUS MEANS



Higher Exposure-Risk in Daily Life

Measles exposure is no longer limited to travelers or isolated outbreaks. With endemic spread, everyday places like schools, grocery stores, airports and buses now carry risk.



New and Increased Burdens for Families

Measles infection means missed school, missed work and avoidable medical visits. Measles exposure will also have severe consequences, with up to 21-day quarantine needed after exposure.



Added Costs

A 2025 cost analysis estimates that a 1,500-case measles outbreak—from an entirely preventable disease—would cost about \$90 million for a single year (nearly \$60,000 per case), driven mainly by public-health response, lost wages and medical care costs, and could climb to nearly \$200 million/year in a worst-case containment scenario.⁶



Changes to International Travel

Other countries are more likely to issue health advisories warning about the risk of measles in the U.S.—potentially deterring international travel to the U.S. and impacting American industries and businesses that rely on tourism—while also making it more common for Americans traveling abroad to be asked to show proof of measles vaccination or immunity.



Declining American Leadership

Losing measles elimination status is an entirely preventable failure that weakens U.S. credibility as a global leader in infectious disease prevention.



SAFE, EFFECTIVE MMR (MEASLES-MUMPS-RUBELLA) VACCINE

A two-dose MMR vaccination series for children has been recommended by health care professionals for decades and has been proven safe, effective and necessary in preventing disease.

1 dose of MMR =



effective in
disease prevention⁷

2 doses of MMR =



effective in
disease prevention⁸

Vaccines to prevent measles were developed by scientists right here in the U.S., have been studied for decades and are necessary to keep Americans protected against this dangerous disease.



A PATH FORWARD

Maintaining high vaccination rates against measles is vital to curb its spread and protect the health of all Americans. Supporting policies that preserve access to safe, effective vaccines is essential to restoring measles elimination in the U.S.

¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/measles>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/history.html>

³ <https://academic.oup.com/ijid/article-abstract/189/>

⁴ <https://asm.org/articles/2019/may/measles-and-immune-amnesia>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/signs-symptoms/index.html>

⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0264410X25011272>

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccines/index.html>

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccines/index.html>