



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Meena Seshamani, M.D., Ph.D., Secretary

August 24, 2026

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to alert you to an increase in measles cases in Maryland, and the designation of certain areas within Maryland as currently experiencing measles outbreaks. In 2026 to date, there have been [31 cases of measles confirmed in Maryland residents](#), 27 of which have been identified since July 15, 2026. Of these 27 recent cases, all have been unvaccinated; the regions of residence are Southern Maryland (14); Central Maryland (8), and Upper Eastern Shore (5). St. Mary's, Cecil and Carroll counties in Maryland have met the [Maryland Department of Health \(MDH\) criteria for outbreak determination](#) (two or more epidemiologically linked cases occurring within a 42-day period, and at least one case is laboratory-confirmed); however, at this time, there is not evidence of widespread community transmission. There are ongoing measles outbreaks in [Pennsylvania](#), [Delaware](#), and a [recently ended outbreak in two Virginia counties](#).

Background

- Measles is an acute viral respiratory illness characterized by a prodrome of fever, malaise, and cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis; sometimes pathognomonic Koplik spots, followed by a maculopapular rash. The rash usually appears about 14 days after a person is exposed, and typically spreads from the head to the trunk to the lower extremities.
- Measles is highly contagious, and is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Patients are considered to be contagious from 4 days before through 4 days after the rash appears.

Measles Vaccination

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles infection.

- Children should routinely get two doses of MMR vaccine: one at age 12-15 months and a second at 4-6 years. [Per the American Academy of Pediatrics](#), healthcare providers may consider an early dose of MMR vaccine for infants aged 6-11 months who live in or are traveling to an outbreak area, including within Maryland, or are traveling internationally. Infants who receive an early dose of MMR vaccine before their first birthday should receive two more doses at the recommended ages at least 28 days apart. Additionally, children who have received one dose of MMR vaccine can receive a second dose early as long as it has been at least 4 weeks (28 days) since the previous dose.
- Adults and teens should be up to date on MMR vaccinations unless they have [presumptive evidence of immunity](#). Adults who are not sure of whether or not they have received two doses of MMR can be given another dose as long as it has been at least 4 weeks (28 days) since the previous dose.

Measles Precautions and Testing for Suspect Cases

- Patients with suspected measles should preferably be placed in airborne precautions in a single-patient airborne infection isolation room. All staff entering the room should use respiratory protection consistent with airborne infection control precautions (e.g. N95 respirator). If an AIIR is not available, place the masked patient in a private room with the door closed. If feasible, the patient should continue to wear the mask for the duration of time spent in the non-AIIR room. For more information, go to [CDC's Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Measles in Healthcare Settings](#).
- Suspect measles cases should be immediately reported to your [local health department](#).
- Measles PCR testing is conducted at MDH Laboratory, with prior approval. To request testing at MDH Laboratory, contact your [local health department](#). **Specimens will not be accepted for testing without prior approval.** (Note that measles IgM testing is not currently available at MDH Laboratory).
 - If measles PCR testing at MDH Laboratory is approved, collect a NP/OP specimen on Dacron™ swab in viral transport media, and complete [form 4676](#). Do not transport the specimen to the MDH Laboratory until coordinated with your local health department. Please note that specimens collected with a cotton swab or transported in incorrect media cannot be tested.

For questions, contact your [local health department](#) or the Maryland Department of Health Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Outbreak Response Bureau at 410-767-6700. Thank you for your assistance with preventing measles in Maryland.

Sincerely,



Meg Sullivan, MD, MPH
Deputy Secretary, Public Health Services



Monique Duwell, MD, MPH
Chief, Center for Infectious Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response