



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Celebrate Graduation – with Measles-Mumps-Rubella Vaccine **13,000 doses distributed to select local health departments to combat measles outbreak**

COLUMBUS – As we congratulate new high school and college graduates and celebrate their accomplishments with family and friends from across the state and beyond, it's an opportunity to make sure that these graduates (and you) are up-to-date on your vaccinations. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reminds Ohioans that immunizations are the most effective way to prevent illness from vaccine-preventable diseases.

The ongoing measles outbreak in parts of Ohio has reached more than 160 cases in Ohio and serves as a reminder to all Ohioans that these diseases can be stopped if people are vaccinated. When individuals are fully vaccinated, the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine is 97 percent effective in preventing the measles.

“With high school and college graduations and graduation parties leading folks to travel across our state and across the U.S., we want to remind Ohioans to keep themselves healthy at these celebrations and to make sure that they are up-to-date on their immunizations,” said ODH State Epidemiologist Dr. Mary DiOrio. “We need to keep in mind that travel can present opportunities for exposure to vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles.”

So far ODH has distributed more than 13,000 doses of MMR vaccine to combat the measles outbreak. Local health departments have administered 8,240 (approximately 62 percent) of these doses to date.

Symptoms for measles include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, sore throat and a red rash appearing three to five days after the start of the symptoms. Those who are not up-to-date on their immunizations should contact their healthcare provider or local health department and receive the MMR vaccine if there is no medical reason not to do so.

ODH and its local public health partners support the vaccine recommendations established by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These recommendations include vaccination schedules for when individuals (children and adults) should receive their vaccinations.

For more information about measles, visit the ODH website at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov>.

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Chronology

- May 27: More than 13,000 doses of MMR vaccine have been distributed to local health departments to date to combat the measles outbreak. Local health jurisdictions have administered 8,240 doses (62 percent) of these doses thus far
- May 23: Number of measles cases surpasses 150 in a six-county area
- May 13: ODH conducts a conference call with media across the state and local health jurisdictions regarding measles outbreak
- May 8: ODH Bureau of Infectious Diseases staff members begin to provide periodic on-site assistance to affected local health jurisdictions
- May 3: ODH develops measles guidance for school nurses in collaboration with CDC and distributes it to school nurses, Head Start Programs and local health jurisdictions
- May 2: ODH issues measles guidance to Ohio schools
- May 1: ODH establishes a measles homepage on its website containing an overview of the measles outbreak, links to the local health jurisdiction in each affected county, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions about measles
- May 1: ODH issues measles guidance to healthcare providers
- April 25: ODH orders MMR vaccines for delivery to all counties that plan to hold vaccination clinics
- April 25: CDC officially confirms Ohio's measles cases
- April 24: ODH, the Ashland County-City Health Department, the Knox County Health Department and the Holmes County General Health District issue a joint press release with the dates/times/locations of MMR vaccine clinics
- April 24: ODH and its public health partners begin regular conference calls with CDC regarding the measles outbreak
- April 24: ODH, Knox County Health Department and Holmes County General Health District issue a combined press release regarding the suspected measles outbreak
- April 23: ODH alerts Ohio hospitals about the suspected measles cases
- April 23: ODH is alerted about a possible measles outbreak in three Ohio counties

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