



U.S. Measles Outbreak: Updated Maps and Case Numbers

Description

Measles is on the rise in West Texas and New Mexico, with over 290 cases reported. Many of those affected are school-aged children who have not been vaccinated. Additionally, there are four cases in Oklahoma linked to these outbreaks. Twelve other states have reported isolated instances, often attributed to international travel.

The Texas outbreak began in late January when health officials identified two cases in Gaines County, an agricultural area on the state's western edge. It quickly spread, affecting at least [259 individuals](#), including 34 hospitalizations and one unvaccinated child who tragically died, marking the first measles-related death in the U.S. in a decade.

In New Mexico, an outbreak was declared in Lea County, bordering Gaines County. While not officially linked to the Texas outbreak, officials believe the cases are "undoubtedly related."

The spread is mainly among those unvaccinated or with uncertain vaccination status. In Gaines County, low vaccination rates persist, partly due to the area's large Mennonite community, which traditionally avoids medical intervention.

Currently, only 82% of kindergartners in Gaines County are vaccinated, well below the 95% needed for community immunity. Texas schools mandate certain vaccines, but exemptions for "conscientious reasons" are common in Gaines County, one of the highest in the state.

In contrast, Lea County, N.M. boasts a 94% M.M.R. vaccination rate for children and teens, yet adult coverage lags at 55% for two doses.

Measles, one of the most contagious diseases, can have severe complications, such as pneumonia and brain swelling. Vaccination remains vital, with two M.M.R. doses being 97% effective in preventing infection.

Experts worry that falling vaccination rates nationwide might jeopardize the U.S.'s elimination status achieved in 2000.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Outbreak** /'aʊt.breɪk/ (noun): A sudden increase in the number of cases of a disease in a specific area.
2. **Contagious** /kən'teɪ.dʒəs/ (adjective): Able to be transmitted from one person to another especially in reference to disease.
3. **Hospitalization** /,hɒspɪtəlɪ'zeɪʃən/ (noun): The process of being admitted to a hospital for treatment.
4. **Complications** /,kɒmplɪ'keɪʃənz/ (noun): Secondary problems or conditions that arise from a primary illness.
5. **Vaccination** /,væk.sɪ'neɪ.ʃən/ (noun): The act of receiving a vaccine to protect against a disease.



6. **Exemptions** /ɪg'zemptʃənz/ (noun): Exclusions from a rule or requirement such as vaccination requirements.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. What percentage of kindergarteners in Gaines County are currently vaccinated?
Option: 85%
Option: 90%
Option: 82%
Option: 75%
2. What is the M.M.R. vaccination rate for children and teens in Lea County, New Mexico?
Option: 65%
Option: 75%
Option: 94%
Option: 88%
3. What is the vaccination coverage rate for adults in Lea County, New Mexico?
Option: 68%
Option: 55%
Option: 80%
Option: 43%
4. What is the main reason for low vaccination rates in Gaines County?
Option: Lack of awareness
Option: Government restrictions
Option: Mennonite community traditions
Option: Vaccine shortage
5. How effective are two M.M.R. doses in preventing measles infection?
Option: 85%
Option: 90%
Option: 97%
Option: 100%
6. What triggered the Texas outbreak in late January?



- Option: International travel
- Option: Mennonite community
- Option: Initial cases identified
- Option: Vaccine mandate

True-False

7. The outbreak in Lea County, New Mexico, is officially linked to the Texas outbreak.
8. Gaines County has vaccination rates meeting the 95% threshold for community immunity.
9. Measles can lead to severe complications like brain swelling.
10. Texas schools do not mandate any vaccines for students.
11. Two M.M.R. doses are more than 90% effective in preventing measles.
12. Falling nationwide vaccination rates pose no threat to the elimination status of measles in the U.S.

Gap-Fill

13. The first measles-related death in a decade in the U.S. occurred in _____.
14. Currently, only _____ of kindergarteners in Gaines County are vaccinated.
15. Lea County, N.M. has a 94% M.M.R. vaccination rate for children and teens, while adult coverage lags at _____ for two doses.
16. Measles is known for being one of the most _____ diseases.
17. Experts are concerned that falling vaccination rates nationwide might threaten the U.S.'s elimination status achieved in _____.
18. The Texas outbreak started when health officials identified _____ cases in Gaines County.



Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. 82% 2. 94% 3. 55% 4. Mennonite community traditions 5. 97% 6. Initial cases identified

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. Gaines County 14. 82% 15. 55% 16. contagious 17. 2000 18. two

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL4

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