



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH &  
SENIOR SERVICES**

# MEASLES

## More than just a rash

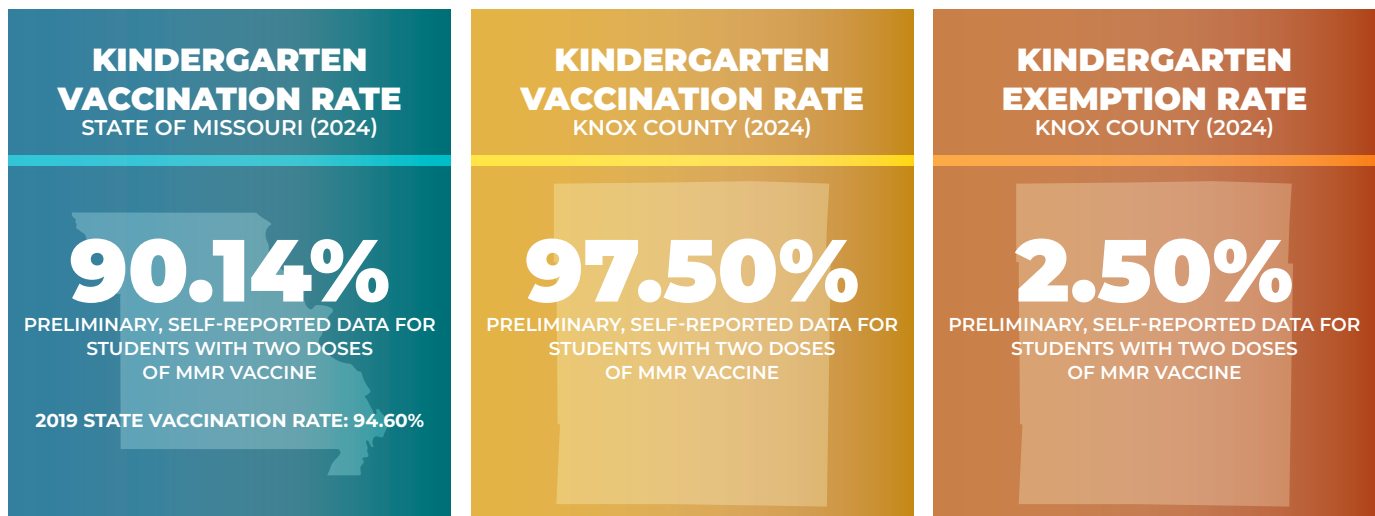
### Current situation

Updated: April 2025

Vaccine uptake continues to decrease in Missouri, making children more vulnerable to measles.

## KNOX COUNTY

The statewide kindergarten exemption rate for the MMR vaccine in 2024 is 5.20%, which is up from 3.50% in 2023.



### What you need to know

- 1.** Measles is a very contagious disease. **One person with measles can easily pass it on to 9 out of 10 people around them who are unvaccinated or do not have natural immunity.**
- 2.** Measles can be very dangerous, especially for babies and immunocompromised adults, and a significant proportion of measles cases will need hospitalization. One in 5 infected persons develops pneumonia, which could be fatal. In some cases, a brain infection may occur and result in swelling, brain damage or death.
- 3.** **Herd immunity** is crucial for preventing disease outbreaks in the community and protecting vulnerable populations who cannot receive vaccines. It can be achieved by 95% of a community being fully vaccinated by two doses of the MMR vaccine.
- 4.** Missouri's measles vaccination rate of 90.14% is **too low to protect our kids from outbreaks** based on preliminary school-reported data.
- 5.** Two doses of the MMR vaccine provides **97% lifetime protection against measles.**

# Measles Quick Facts



Fever  
(103-105°F)



Red Blotchy  
Rash



Red Inflamed  
Eyes



Runny  
Nose



Cough and  
Sore Throat



White Spots

Symptoms



- Most measles cases are among preschool children, adolescents and young adults.
  - Anyone who isn't vaccinated is at risk of getting measles, regardless of age.
- Measles symptoms usually appear in two stages, starting 1 – 2 weeks after a person has been exposed to the virus.
  - The first stage starts with a runny nose, cough, a rising fever and eyes may become red and sensitive to light.
  - The second stage begins about 3 – 7 days later and includes a high temperature and a red blotchy rash that begins on the head and works its way down the body.
- A person with measles is contagious from 4 days before the rash appears until 4 days after the rash appears.
  - It spreads through the air when a person with measles coughs or sneezes and can live in the air for up to 2 hours.
  - It can also live on surfaces.

## Severe Complications



Pneumonia



Severe Diarrhea



Brain Infection



Blindness



Ear Infection

## Vaccination: Safe and Effective

Two doses lasts a lifetime, providing 97% protection



Vaccination offers the best protection against measles. Children should be vaccinated against measles at 12 – 15 months old and again at 4 – 6 years old.



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