Warning: Highly Contagious!

Measles has been called “the most infectious disease doctors know.” When exposed, nine out of 10 unvaccinated people will become ill with measles. It is spread through airborne transmission from the cough or sneeze of an infected person. It can also live for two hours in an airspace after the infected person has left. Measles starts as an acute respiratory infection with cough, conjunctivitis, congestion, and fever followed by a characteristic rash. Individuals are contagious and can spread disease from four days prior to the development of the rash to four days after rash development.

Measles is not a benign illness. Many suffer from complications such as ear infections, pneumonia, and diarrhea. Others suffer more serious complications. One out of every 1,000 children with measles develops encephalitis or swelling of the brain which often leads to long-term neurological problems. One to three of 1,000 who become infected will die from respiratory or neurological complications.

Measles can be prevented with vaccination - the MMR vaccine. This is administered in the US at 12-15 months of age with a booster dose between four to six years of age. One dose of MMR vaccine is approximately 93% effective at preventing measles; two doses are approximately 97% effective.

Measles was declared eliminated from the US in 2000, meaning there was no endemic virus transmission over a 12 month or longer period. Since 2000, there have been small pockets of outbreaks throughout the US, like Ohio is currently experiencing. These outbreaks are sparked in communities with low vaccination rates and by transmission abroad.

There have been 85 cases of measles and 36 hospitalizations in the greater Columbus area since the start of the outbreak in November 2022. All cases were in children under 18 years old, 65% in the 1-5 age group, and all cases occurred in unvaccinated or...
partially vaccinated children. Although the outbreak was officially declared over in early February, lessons learned can be applied not only in central Ohio, but across the state.

You can become infected with measles, even if you don’t come face to face with someone who is infected. This is why vaccination is so important. You can’t control who was in the airspace before you, so having a good level of immunity is critical to staying protected.

(Date from CDC website and Annual Review of Virology, MMR and autism, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-virology-092818-015515)

What can you do as a legislator?

**Find** your local health department (https://odh.ohio.gov/find-local-health-districts) to stay abreast of additional disease outbreaks


**Check** that you and your family are fully vaccinated (against measles, flu & COVID)

**Encourage** your constituents to check that their children are up to date on their MMR vaccine

**Support** legislation that promotes routine vaccination

**Free Online Course**

Do you have questions about science, but aren’t sure where to look for answers?

Now you can learn everything you wanted to know and become a vaccine legend.

**The Vaccine Quest**

It’s normal to have questions about vaccines: How do I know they’re safe? How can I make sense of all the evidence? OC4V’s national partner, Voices for Vaccines, has developed a free online course to teach you everything you might want to know. Whether you’re a novice or an expert, it will take your knowledge to the next level. Embark on the Vaccine Quest yourself and share with your constituents today (https://www.voicesforvaccines.org/course/the-vaccine.quest/).

**Social Media Messaging**

Help spread the benefits of routine immunizations with your constituents on social media!

Sample Copy for Social Media:

The benefits of routine immunizations have been proven through individual experience and broad medical consensus over the course of generations. Find out how to be a vaccine advocate by visiting https://ohioaap.org/oc4v
Stay Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines Including Boosters

**MYTH OR FACT? I don’t need a booster because I got the vaccine.**

**MYTH.** The fact is because the passage of time reduces the effectiveness of the initial vaccine series, getting the COVID-19 booster vaccine reduces your risk of being infected with the virus, becoming severely ill, or needing hospitalization.

**MYTH OR FACT? Boosters greatly reduce the chance of hospitalization from COVID.**

**FACT.** A third dose of Pfizer or Moderna reduces the chance of both an emergency room visit and hospitalization by 94%, compared with unvaccinated people, and reduces the chance of a trip to an urgent care clinic by 82% (CDC).

**What You Need to Know**

- Updated (bivalent) boosters became available on:
  - **September 2, 2022** for people aged 12 years and older
  - **October 12, 2022** for people aged five to 11 years
  - **December 9, 2022** for children aged six months to four years who completed the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine primary series

- Updated (bivalent) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine also became available on December 9, 2022 for children aged six months to four years to complete the primary series.

**CDC recommends one updated (bivalent) booster dose:**

- For everyone aged five years and older if it has been at least two months since your last dose.
- For children aged six months to four years who completed the Moderna primary series and if it has been at least two months.

**Getting Vaccines If You Had or Currently Have COVID-19**

If you recently had COVID-19, you may consider delaying your next vaccine dose (whether a primary dose or booster) by three months from when your symptoms started or, if you had no symptoms, when you first received a positive test.

Reinfection is less likely in the weeks to months after infection. However, certain factors, such as personal risk of severe disease, or risk of disease in a loved one or close contact, local COVID-19 community level, and the most common variant currently causing illness, could be reasons to get a vaccine sooner rather than later.
Vaccines make the world a better and safer place for families and society. Vaccine advancements over the last century have eradicated childhood illness and improved health and life expectancy. It’s important that we continue and increase the use of vaccines for a healthier and more prosperous world. Yet, it is also reasonable to have questions and concerns about health, safety, and efficacy. Too often the conversation is overtaken by the loudest voices on either side of the debate which shuts out thoughtful engagement.

Ohio AAP is bringing together immunization partners across the state to ultimately improve immunization uptake and prevent the spread of disease. The conference will be a forum to address immunization and public health challenges by sharing successful strategies that strengthen the work our coalitions and partnerships perform.

Ohio AAP 2023 Spring Education Meeting
April 21, 2023 • 12:00-3:15 pm
Dublin Integrated Education Center
6805 Bobcat Way
Dublin, OH 43016

*Registration starts at 11:30 am  Lunch Provided

In-person attendees will receive FREE immunization resources for practices!

Register today!
ohioaap.org/springmeeting/