

# MEASLES OUTBREAK IN NEW YORK CITY

## Get Up to Date on Your Vaccines

**FACT:** There is currently a large outbreak of measles — a highly contagious virus — in parts of New York City (NYC), primarily in Williamsburg and Borough Park, Brooklyn.

**FACT:** On April 9, 2019, the New York City Health Commissioner declared a Public Health Emergency and ordered that every adult and child who lives, works or spends time in ZIP codes 11205, 11206, 11211 and 11249 be vaccinated.

**FACT:** If the Health Department identifies an unvaccinated person exposed to measles in ZIP codes 11205, 11206, 11211 and 11249, that individual or their parent or guardian could be fined \$1,000.

**FACT:** Measles can be prevented easily with a safe vaccine called the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, or MMR.

- **If you have not been vaccinated, get the MMR vaccine immediately. If you do not know your vaccination history, check with your doctor.**
- If you would like to find a clinic to get a measles vaccination, call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health) and search for **measles**.
- The MMR vaccine is available at the Health Department's Immunization Clinic in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, and NYC Health + Hospitals, regardless of your immigration status or ability to pay.

## Q&A

### What is measles?

Measles is a virus that causes fever and rash; it can be deadly.

### Who can get measles?

- Anyone can get measles at any age.
- Measles can be serious for people of all ages, but those who are most at risk include infants and young children, people who are pregnant, people with weakened immune systems, and adults who are not immune to measles.

### How do you prevent measles?

- The best way to prevent measles is with vaccination — it is safe and effective.
- If you have a child who is younger than 6 months of age, keep them away from anyone who is ill. If your child is exposed to measles, call your doctor for instructions.
- If you have measles, stay home for four days after the rash starts — if you go out, you will transmit measles to others. If you are sick and need to see a doctor, call ahead so they can tell you how to prevent transmitting measles to others.

### Who should get vaccinated for measles?

- Everyone.
- By order of the Commissioner of Health, every adult and child who lives, works or spends time in ZIP codes 11205, 11206, 11211 and 11249 must be vaccinated. People who have a medical condition that prevents them from receiving the vaccine do not need to get vaccinated.

- Infants living or attending child care in these ZIP codes must get an extra, early dose of the vaccine between 6 and 11 months of age for additional protection, and children in these ZIP codes cannot attend school without getting the vaccine.
- Other infants should also receive an extra, early dose of the vaccine — see the next section of questions and answers for guidance.
- Parents with children 1 year of age or older who have already had their first dose of MMR should speak to their doctor and consider an early second dose if they live or spend time in Williamsburg, Borough Park or Crown Heights, or any other area with measles activity.
- If you choose not to vaccinate your child, you put your child and other people's lives at risk.

### **Do I need to get a vaccine if:**

- **I'm pregnant?**
  - o If you are pregnant and immune to measles, there is no risk to the pregnancy. If you do not have vaccination records, speak to your doctor.
- **My infant is between 6 and 11 months of age?**
  - o Infants in ZIP codes 11205, 11206, 11211 and 11249 must be vaccinated.
  - o Infants in Borough Park and Crown Heights should be vaccinated.
  - o Parents with infants and children who are members of the Orthodox Jewish community and live in other NYC neighborhoods should speak to their doctor and consider an early dose of MMR vaccine.
- **I work in Williamsburg?**
  - o Yes. Under the Commissioner's Order you are required to be vaccinated or have proof of measles immunity if you work in ZIP codes 11205, 11206, 11211 and 11249. If you do not have vaccination records, speak to your doctor.
- **I spend time in Williamsburg?**
  - o All New Yorkers should check to make sure they are immune to measles. If you have not received the MMR vaccine, do so now.

### **How is measles transmitted?**

- When someone with measles sneezes or coughs, people can breathe in the virus for up to two hours afterward and may get measles.
- Measles is very contagious. If one person has it, 90 percent of the people around them will also get measles if they are not vaccinated or immune.
- People who have measles can transmit the virus four days before through four days after their rash appears.

### **What are the symptoms of measles?**

- Early symptoms include high fever, cough, runny nose, and red or watery eyes. A rash of red spots appears three to five days later.
- Complications can include diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, seizures, inflammation of the brain and death.
- If you see symptoms, call your doctor right away. Your doctor will let you know what to do so you do not transmit measles to others.

### **How is measles treated?**

- Measles cannot be treated with a specific medicine. Some symptoms — like fever — can be treated with medication.

### **Does the measles vaccine cause autism?**

- No. Scientific studies have proven there is no link between vaccines and autism.