

KCHD Urges Families to Take Steps to Protect Against Measles: Tips for the Remaining School Year and Upcoming Summer Camps

In the final months of the school year and as families begin planning for summer camps, travel, and outdoor activities, the Kane County Health Department (KCHD) is encouraging residents to take a few simple, but effective steps to protect children from measles, a highly contagious disease that can spread quickly in classrooms, camps, and other group settings.

Cases of measles continue to occur across the United States and in Illinois, often linked to travel and lower vaccination coverage. With children spending time in close contact at school now and soon transitioning into summer camps and group programs, prevention remains more important than ever.

“Whether in the classroom or at camp, children are in close contact with one another, which makes it easier for illnesses like measles to spread,” said Michael Isaacson, KCHD executive director. “Staying up to date on vaccinations and practicing good health habits helps keep kids safe year-round.”

What Parents and Caregivers Should Know

Measles spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes and can linger in a space for up to two hours. Symptoms typically include high fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, and a rash that usually begins on the face and spreads. The measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is safe and highly effective:

1. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles.
2. Children should receive their first dose at 12–15 months and a second dose at 4–6 years.

Tips for the Remainder of the School Year

Parents and caregivers can help reduce the risk of measles and other illnesses by:

1. Ensuring children are up to date on all required school vaccinations.
2. Keeping children home if they are sick, especially with fever or rash.

3. Teaching and reinforcing proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette.
4. Notifying the school if a child is diagnosed with or exposed to measles.
5. Checking in with a healthcare provider if unsure about vaccination status.
6. Keeping a copy of their child's vaccination records easily accessible in case documentation is needed to quickly confirm immunity and avoid unnecessary exclusion from school or activities.

Planning Ahead for Summer Camps and Activities

As children prepare for camps, sports, and group programs:

1. Review and update vaccination records before registration.
2. Schedule any needed immunizations early to ensure full protection.
3. Inform camp staff of any health concerns or symptoms.
4. Pack essentials like hand sanitizer and tissues.

Guidance for Camps and Summer Programs

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers a [Summer Camp Toolkit](#) to help camps prevent and respond to measles and other infectious diseases. The toolkit includes guidance on:

1. Verifying immunization records for campers and staff.
2. Developing illness policies and response plans.
3. Promoting hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
4. Communicating with families about illness prevention.

Camp operators are encouraged to review CDC guidance and ensure staff are prepared to recognize symptoms and respond quickly to protect campers. [Reporting measles and other communicable diseases to KCHD](#) should be part of the response plan.

Maintaining high vaccination coverage helps protect not only individuals but also vulnerable community members who cannot be vaccinated, including infants and those with certain medical conditions. KCHD encourages families to talk with their healthcare provider about vaccines and to take advantage of available [immunization services](#) in the community.

For more information about measles prevention and vaccination, visit:

<https://www.kanehealth.com/Pages/Measles.aspx>