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## Although no measles cases have been reported in Kane County, officials monitoring outbreak in Chicago area



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Although DuPage County recently reported its first measles case since 2009 amid an outbreak in Chicago, Kane County is currently free of the infectious disease, health officials said.

Still, the Kane County Health Department is tracking the outbreak, according to its executive director, Michael Isaacson. He said Kane County has not seen a case of the measles in five years, but the department is concerned about the high number of cases that have been reported in the Chicago area within the last two months.

Chicago has seen roughly 60 measles cases since March 4, according to a dashboard about the outbreak on the city's website. Those cases were the [first in Chicago since 2019](#).

Outside of Chicago, two cases were reported in suburban Cook County, one case was reported in [Lake County](#), two cases were reported in [Will County](#) and one case was reported in [DuPage County](#), according to Isaacson.

He said that, in the state of Illinois, more cases of measles have been reported in 2024 than were reported in the previous nine years combined.

The Kane County Health Department is also currently working with one person who might have been in contact with the disease, Isaacson said.

"They're just monitoring for symptoms," he said. "Not a big threat. We assume that they have protection from either a vaccine or previous infection."

The best way to protect against measles is vaccination, according to Isaacson. He said the Kane County Health Department is also concerned about this outbreak of measles because some parents are not keeping their children on schedule for vaccinations.

The good news, Isaacson said, is that public schools in Illinois have robust immunization requirements, and that upwards of 95% of children are vaccinated. The exceptions are often for religious reasons, he said.

Measles was nearly eradicated in the United States almost 25 years ago, according to Isaacson. He said that, since so many people are vaccinated here in America, the main way measles spreads is by people who travel to countries that do not have widespread measles vaccination.

"The more people here we have that are susceptible, the more likely that is that we're going to have a spread of cases," Isaacson said.

The disease is a concern for two main reasons, according to Isaacson.

The first is the speed and ease at which the disease can travel from person to person. He said measles can even linger in the air or on surfaces, infecting people for hours after the sick person leaves the area.

The second is the seriousness of the illness. A large percentage of children who get the measles end up in the hospital, Isaacson said.

According to a news release from the Kane County Health Department, measles infection causes a rash, a high fever, coughing, runny nose and pink eye.

Most people are vaccinated against measles and therefore not at high risk, the news release said.

However, if someone notices measles symptoms and believes they may have it, that person should stay home and call their doctor instead of going in person, according to Isaacson.

He said infected people going in person to the doctor can spread the disease further, particularly to those with an already lowered immune system.

If someone is identified as having measles or another highly infectious disease, the doctor or lab that diagnosed the illness is required by state law to report that infection to the local health department, Isaacson said.

From there, he said the health department determines who that person could have spread their illness to and develops a plan to mitigate the spread of the illness. They may also ask the infected person to quarantine to prevent further spread.

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