

Your Community, Your Family

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Composition I

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Protecting your community is a must, regardless of where you live, the people you interact with and if they are safe then so are you. Some safety measures are as easy as taking a booster shot. That is where you can help yourself, family, neighbors and community. Vaccines and booster information should be readily available to anyone regardless of social class. It can begin at a local level from community elected officials and up to the state level with the governor. Healthy constituents should be a priority for elected officials as they are the ones being represented. Although not everyone is on the side of vaccines, which is in their right, however it certainly became the focus of many people with the recent Measles outbreak in 2025. In the Texas counties of Lubbock, Yoakum and Gaines. Also reaching into New Mexico's Lea County. As a fellow Lea County resident, I believe a two-part call to action from people in New Mexico and West Texas should be warranted. The first is for people to check their vaccine records with their providers or stop by the local clinic since much of the information is located in the state health office records. The second part, followed by a local government led effort to get people informed and provide booster shots through mobile clinics. Achievable by sending letters and emails to government officials.

The measles was considered under control by many people until the local and national news started reporting about an outbreak between West Texas and New Mexico. Many people believed that it was no longer a real health issue or anything to be concerned about. "Measles was considered eliminated in the U.S., thanks to the highly effective MMR vaccine and high vaccinations rates" (Public Health on Call, 2025). Such health issues can be mitigated from an early age with vaccines and safe practices. Especially when dealing with contagious viral diseases like measles. That is why being informed, educated and involved is so important in keeping a community safe. Most of the time people don't know that it is a two-booster shot taken

at different ages. “Children should get two doses of the MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age” (CDC, 2025). The MMR vaccine covers the measles, mumps, rubella and the chickenpox. However, the decision for the vaccine is voluntary and should be respected if the adult refuses the vaccine. There are people that prefer a holistic approach to medicines and when dealing with illness. If someone chooses not to receive the boosters then it should be honored and respected based on their personal view of modern medicine. Everyone’s upbringing and beliefs are usually based on personal experiences they have had with medicines. I have personally seen the effects of children getting sick from not receiving vaccines as I grew up outside of the United States. Not knowing the benefits and availability of vaccines. So that is why I believe that if someone has the opportunity to receive medicine that can prevent illnesses that are deadly when untreated, then they should accept it. That being said, many times it is a question of exposure to information related to viral diseases and the effectiveness of vaccines on real world cases.

As a member of my community, that is one step closer to having a healthy community because a contagious viral disease can easily spread into many households. Affecting infants, children, adults and senior citizens. Adults can help combat outbreaks by getting informed on ways to prevent contagious diseases and how to respond in the event someone in their household starts to show signs of illness. If information is not easily available to people, then that can worsen response to someone getting infected. That is where assistance from local representatives and states legislature can greatly increase the amount of people who want to get vaccinated or will get vaccinated. Local government officials benefit from having healthy constituents since they are a representation of that community. Many representatives should be willing to bridge the communication between citizens, school districts, healthcare providers and locally ran clinics.

Creating local awareness of the major impact that an outbreak can have on a small community. Like joining residents at town hall meetings to discuss issues like the ones in Lea County. Since not being vaccinated highly increases the risk of contraction, it should also be seriously taken into consideration. The CDC reported that the United States in 2024 had 285 known cases of the measles of which 89% of the people infected were unvaccinated. For smaller communities that depend on the local workforce, being unable to go to work can possibly have a long-term impact on the local economy. People who tested positive for the measles had to be quarantined for 21 days per the CDC recommendations to halt the spread. If enough people miss work, companies will be forced to shut down until they are to recover enough workers or until enough people are willing to temporarily relocate to work while people are out. Then there will be the problem of what to do with the displaced workers and the people currently working. Outbreaks affect not only local economies but also school districts because of the similar situation where there is a great possibility that relocated workers bring school age children with them. Which can moreover create more infected patients. Having someone to spearhead local engagement can highly increase turnout to get vaccinated.

While local representatives are engaging with local constituents, state officials and the state health department can greatly improve turnouts with incentives. Like providing mobile clinics to more remote communities as well as to urban areas where transportation can sometimes be an issue. Having mobile clinics working throughout affected counties first can completely change the odds against the spread of a contagious virus. Although people should know that there is still a possibility of contracting a disease especially since most viruses mutate with time. “Despite high vaccine effectiveness, wild-type measles can occur in previously vaccinated persons” (Clinical Infectious Diseases, Vol 80, Iss 3, 2025). This also provides an

opportunity to help spread awareness through social media. With more people connected via the internet to each other, creating digital flyers to send can assist with getting information to everyone regardless of whether they live in the affected counties or not. It is useful information, that if anything can be a refresher on a subject that was just screened through at another time where the measles was not a direct threat. “Experts advise people to ensure they’re vaccinated against the illness and note some may want to get booster shots” (Bohannon, 2025). The digital information can provide leads on where to get vaccinated, more information on what to do if you or another begin having symptoms. Knowing that is just a click away can be the difference between a simple allergic reaction to something or contracting a viral disease.

Digital media can also give state, local and medical officials the chance to create digital town halls where vital information can be given out to people. Leading the way in providing knowledge to a broader audience which should be simplified for better understanding. Although people tend to forget about contagious diseases when they are almost non-existent but there is always a possibility of it returning. Communication between people is vital in educating on the many benefits of certain vaccines. Especially when as of April 2025, more than half of the cases were kids ages ranging from newborn to 17 years old for a total of 27 cases. One dose of the vaccine is 93 percent effective against measles then rises to 97 percent after the second dose. As with all medicines there is a likelihood of side effects, while some people may not want to receive it if they have had allergic reactions to it or have a weakened immune system. All we can do is try to mitigate the potential risk of contracting measles amongst our community. Being informed can bring many benefits and remind us of what can be achieved when we work together. Protecting yourself protects your community, prevents outbreaks and reduces possible death. Take action today; vaccinate, protect and prevent.

Measles Vaccine

Safe Communities



The health of our communities should be the priority of everyone and not just that of local leadership. One part of what makes a healthy community's foundation is that people make responsible decisions like taking vaccines, when necessary, like during outbreaks.

Measles Outbreak 2024

The CDC reported that the United States in 2024 had 285 known cases of the measles of which 89% of the people infected were unvaccinated. Since it is incredibly contagious, more people should be considerate of how they get infected or can easily infect other people.

89%

New Mexico & West Texas

During the recent outbreak in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. Even though, "Measles was considered eliminated in the U.S. in 2000, thanks to the highly effective MMR vaccine and high vaccination rates" (Public Health On Call, 2025). In early 2025, Southeastern New Mexico experienced an outbreak of the measles with some neighboring counties in West Texas. People who tested positive for the measles had to be quarantined for 21 days per the CDC recommendations in an effort to halt the spread.



Prevention

Many health issues can be mitigated from an early age with vaccines and safe practices. Especially for the contagious viral disease called the Measles, although the vaccine is offered to children, adults can also receive it as a two-stage shot especially if they got it before 1968. However, some adults prefer to opt-out as well as not allowing their children to receive it.

1968

From The Experts

"experts advise people to ensure they're vaccinated against the illness and note some may want to get booster shots" (Bohannon, 2025)

"Despite high vaccine effectiveness, wild-type measles can occur in previously vaccinated persons" (Clinical Infectious Diseases, Vol 80, Iss 3, 2025).



Conclusion

I believe that vaccines can save people's lives. I also believe that some symptoms of smaller infections can be solved holistically, however there is truly no replacement for modern medicine.

Infants, children, adults and senior citizens are all subject to exposure which can result in death. That is why understanding the importance of vaccines should be known to all. Especially if you or someone you know have health issues. Many resources are available online and emergency health clinics have been setup around New Mexico.

Resources

<https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2025/the-measles-outbreak-in-west-texas-and-beyond>
<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html>
<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/erd/ideb/mog/>
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/mollybohannon/2025/03/25/should-you-get-a-measles-vaccine-booster-heres-what-to-know/?ctpv=searchpage>
<https://academic.oup.com/cid/article-abstract/80/3/663/7756619?redirectedFrom=fulltext>



21 Days



2025



Resources

https://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccines/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fvaccines%2Fvpd%2Fmmr%2Fpublic%2Findex.html

<https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2025/the-measles-outbreak-in-west-texas-and-beyond>

<https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html>

<https://www.nmhealth.org/about/erd/ideb/mog/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/mollybohannon/2025/03/25/should-you-get-a-measles-vaccine-booster-heres-what-to-know/?ctpv=searchpage>

<https://academic.oup.com/cid/article-abstract/80/3/663/7756619?redirectedFrom=fulltext>