

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 22, 2025

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Buchanan County Public Health Encourages Vaccination Amid National Measles Outbreak

Independence, Iowa – Buchanan County Public Health is encouraging residents to check their vaccination records and ensure they are protected against measles, following a concerning increase in cases nationally.

As of April 10, 2025, a total of 712 confirmed measles cases were reported by 25 jurisdictions: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City, New York State, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Washington. Currently, Iowa **does not** have any active cases of measles. The last case of measles in Iowa was in 2019, however, health officials are emphasizing the importance of prevention — especially through vaccination.

“Measles is one of the most contagious diseases known,” said Griffin Hickey, MPH, Director of Buchanan County Public Health. “Just one case in a community with low vaccination rates can lead to a serious outbreak.”

Local Vaccination Rates Below Target

Only 84% of Iowa children turning two received their first dose of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine in 2024. This is well below the 95% threshold needed to maintain community immunity and prevent the spread of the virus.

Buchanan County Public Health is working with local clinics and schools to increase awareness and access to vaccinations. The MMR vaccine is safe, effective, and the best protection against measles. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are 97% effective in preventing infection.

Who Needs the MMR Vaccine?

- **Children** should receive their first MMR dose at 12–15 months, and a second dose at 4–6 years.
- **Adults born after 1957** without documentation of measles vaccination or disease should receive at least one dose of MMR.
- **Healthcare workers, international travelers, and college students** should have two documented doses.
- Individuals unsure of their vaccine status are encouraged to get vaccinated – receiving the vaccine poses no harm even if you’ve already had it.

Those born before 1957 are generally considered immune, though healthcare workers must have documented immunity due to the risk of exposure in medical settings.

Protecting the Community

Although there are currently no reported cases in Iowa, Buchanan County Public Health is prepared to respond swiftly to any suspected measles case in collaboration with state health authorities.

Residents with questions about their vaccine status or how to schedule an appointment can contact Buchanan County Public Health at (319) 332-0860 or their healthcare provider.

Let's keep measles out of our community — **check your records, talk to your provider, and get vaccinated.**

About Buchanan County Public Health Department

Buchanan County Public Health is dedicated to empowering our community through strong collaboration, with a focus on disease prevention, health education, and emergency preparedness. Our mission is to advocate for the wellbeing of all residents by providing accessible resources and proactive public health services.

Guided by our vision to be a leader in community engagement and access to care, we strive to achieve the best possible health outcomes for individuals and the community as a whole. Our values — community presence, individual and community wellbeing, resilience, and risk management—inform every aspect of our work.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.buchanancounty.iowa.gov/services/publichealth>

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Sources: Iowa HHS and CDC