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## Measles Immunization Recommendations Ahead of March Break Travel

**Attention:** Physicians, Hospitals, CNE, ER Manager, ER Physician, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Professionals, Community Health Centres, Walk-In Urgent Care Clinic, Nurse Practitioner, Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams, Midwives, Family Health Team, Indigenous Healthcare & Community, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Neighbouring Health Units, Paramedic Services, Corrections

**Date:** February 23, 2026

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While measles activity in Ontario has decreased, there continues to be ongoing measles transmission occurring globally, including in many areas that families typically visit during the March Break. Therefore, [SMDHU is reminding those who are planning to travel to ensure their immunization records are up to date.](#)

Measles activity remains elevated around the world. For the most recent 12-month period, the World Health Organization noted large or disruptive outbreaks in several common vacation spots, including Mexico, Belize and much of Europe (e.g., Ireland, Netherlands, Belgium). **Both Mexico and the United States have seen increases from September 2025 to present, with 982 cases reported in the United States since the start of 2026, concentrated in Florida, South Carolina and Utah.**

In Canada, 192 cases have been reported to date for 2026 (current as of February 16). **Currently, there are [57 active cases of measles in Canada](#), with the majority of cases concentrated in Manitoba and Alberta.** There has only been 1 confirmed case of measles in Ontario in 2026 to date.

### **Vaccinate patients who are not up-to-date, especially those planning to travel:**

- Infants **6 months to 11 months of age** normally do not receive MMR vaccine but for those who are travelling to areas with increased measles transmission, they should be immunized with one dose of MMR. They will still need to receive the 2 measles-containing immunizations at/after 1 year of age and at 4-6 years of age.
- Preschoolers who are travelling can receive their second dose of MMRV before their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday to provide them with protection earlier.
- For school-age children, ensure the second dose of MMRV was received.
- Adults 18 years and older who are health care workers, post-secondary students or have been advised by their health care provider.
- Those born in 1970 or after who are planning to travel outside of Canada are also recommended a second dose.

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View all current Public Health Alerts by visiting the Health Professional Resources page at:

<http://www.smdhu.org/PHA>

Receive urgent public health updates by email (such as Public Health Alert) by subscribing at: [www.smdhu.org/PHAlert](http://www.smdhu.org/PHAlert)

- People born before 1970 in Canada are presumed immune due to circulating measles in Canada at that time. However, if they are traveling outside of Canada and have never had measles infection or measles vaccine, it is prudent to have 1 dose.
- All Ontarians, regardless of date of birth, are eligible for two publicly funded doses of measles-containing vaccine based on the health care provider's clinical judgment and the needs of the patient (e.g., health care worker, post-secondary student, planning to travel where measles is circulating).

**Note:** Vaccination over serology is generally preferred.

- Public Health Agency of Canada has provided [measles travel health advice](#)
- For more detailed information on measles immunization, go to the [Canadian Immunization Guide measles chapter](#).

### Consider measles testing in a returning traveler with symptoms.

Health care providers should remain alert to patients who present with the following key [symptoms](#) of measles:

- Fever (>38.3° C) AND
- Cough/coryza/conjunctivitis AND
- Generalized maculopapular rash **and have recently traveled abroad and/or are unvaccinated**
- If your patient meets the above criteria, order the following tests:
  - [Measles PCR -nasopharyngeal \(NP\) /throat swab and urine specimen](#) - NP swab (pink-coloured medium) and urine (50 mls), for measles PCR AND
  - [Measles Serology](#) – blood test (IgG and IgM)
- Collect all specimens in your office to limit possible transmission elsewhere. Mark "suspect measles" on the lab requisition. It is imperative that the PCR tests are also ordered as the serology by itself is usually not sufficient to rule in or out measles in either vaccinated or unvaccinated patients.

### Isolate

Promptly isolate any patient with suspect or confirmed measles in a single room with negative air flow (airborne infection isolation room), if available. If such a room is not available, please follow all measles [Infection Prevention and Control](#) recommendations including allowing ~2 hour of air exchange before another patient or unprotected staff enter the room.

### Report

Immediately **report all suspect or confirmed cases** of measles infection to SMDHU at 705-721-7520 extension 8809 during work hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or after hours 1-888-225-7851.

### More information:

- [Measles Information for Clinicians \(publichealthontario.ca\)](#)