



South Plains Public Health District

Press Release: 1/29/2025

Confirmed Case of Measles in Gaines County

Gaines County, Texas – South Plains Public Health District (SPPHD) has identified one confirmed case of measles in a school aged resident of Gaines County with travel to Lubbock County for medical care. The individual was not vaccinated. The South Plains Public Health District is investigating cases and will continue to investigate cases that come in. This is the first confirmed case of Measles in Gaines County in over 20 years.

Health officials from SPPHD, Lubbock Public Health, and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Region 1 are actively investigating the cases and conducting contact tracing to identify possible exposures and limit further spread of the disease.

Due to the highly contagious nature measles, additional cases may occur, especially in unvaccinated people.

“Measles is a serious yet preventable disease,” said Dr. Jamie Felberg, SPPHD local health authority. “Staying up to date on vaccinations is the most effective way to safeguard yourself, your loved ones, and the community from this highly contagious illness. With these recent cases, it’s more important than ever to ensure your immunizations are current.”

ABOUT MEASLES

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease that spreads through coughing, sneezing or simply being near someone infected. The virus can linger in the air for up to two hours after an infected person has left an area, making it easy to contract in shared spaces.

SYMPTOMS

High fever

Cough

Runny nose

Red, watery eyes

Rash, typically starting on the face and spreading downward 2–5 days after initial symptoms

INFECTIOUS PERIOD

People with measles can spread the virus from four days before the rash appears to four days after.

POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS AND HIGH-RISK GROUPS

While measles can infect anyone, complications can be severe and include ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, or, in rare cases, brain inflammation (encephalitis). Those at the highest risk include:

Infants and children under 5 years old

Pregnant individuals

People with weakened immune systems

PREVENTION

Vaccination with the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is the most effective way to prevent measles.

- Two doses of the MMR vaccine provide a 97% protection rate and long-lasting immunity.
- The Texas Department of State Health Services and Local Public Health officials:

The first dose at 12–15 months of age

The second dose at 4–6 years of age

WHAT TO DO IF EXPOSED OR SYMPTOMATIC

If you believe you have been exposed to measles or are experiencing symptoms:

Isolate yourself immediately to prevent spreading the virus to others.

Contact your healthcare provider by phone to arrange testing in a way that minimizes exposure to others.

If you do not have a regular health provider call your local health department and the number below.

Watch for symptoms, which typically develop 7–21 days after exposure.

VACCINE ACCESS IN THE SOUTH PLAINS

Insured Individuals: Contact your healthcare provider or local pharmacy to check vaccine availability.

Uninsured or Underinsured Individuals: Free or low-cost vaccines are available through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) or Adult Safety Net (ASN) programs.

For more information about Measles, contact your healthcare provider or contact the South Plains Public Health District in...

Gaines (Seminole) 432-955-1021

Terry (Brownfield) 806-637-2164

Dawson (Lamesa) 806-872-5863

Yoakum (Denver City) 806-592-2706

Lubbock Public Health at 806-775-2933 (Lubbock County)

Department of State Health Services Region 1 Office at 806 -783-6400