

Massachusetts doctors push for measles vaccination after cases reported in several states

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Local doctors are urging families to get vaccinated against measles following a troubling rise in measles cases across several U.S. states and

Europe.

The CDC over the last couple of months has been notified of 23 confirmed U.S. cases of measles. That includes two outbreaks with more than five cases each, and seven direct importations of measles by international travelers.

In Philadelphia, the city's health department reported an outbreak of nine [measles cases](#).

"The Massachusetts Medical Society is concerned about reported cases of measles in Europe and at least six states and potential exposures at two large United States airports and wishes to remind all patients in the Commonwealth to do their part to protect themselves and their [communities](#) from contracting and spreading measles," said Massachusetts Medical Society President Barbara Spivak.

Most of the 23 confirmed U.S. cases were among children and adolescents who had not received a measles-containing vaccine, even if age eligible.

"Because of a successful vaccination campaign that effectively eliminated measles in the United States in 2000, many people may not be aware that measles, which is transmitted via exposure to contact with airborne droplets, is highly contagious and can lead to serious and life-threatening complications," Spivak said. "Children and those with compromised immune systems are especially at risk."

Measles cases often originate from unvaccinated or undervaccinated U.S. residents who travel internationally and then transmit the disease to people who are not vaccinated against measles.

The recent jump of measles importations from abroad reflects the rise in

global measles cases and a growing threat from the disease.

"As a community, our [best defense](#) against the spread of measles remains ensuring that [children](#) receive their measles, mumps, and rubella vaccinations following Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines—two doses, one at 12 to 15 months, the next between the ages of four and six," Spivak said.

"The vaccine is safe and highly effective and generally induces lifelong immunity," the Massachusetts Medical Society president added. "If you, or a child for whom you care have not been fully vaccinated or you have questions about the vaccine, we urge you to speak to a trusted health care provider as soon as possible."

Measles symptoms appear seven to 14 days after contact with the virus and typically include [high fever](#), cough, runny nose, and watery eyes. Measles rash appears three to five days after the first symptoms.

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