

# Statement on Measles Outbreak

Camps are inherently at a higher risk for illness outbreaks given the close contact and confined environments in their communities. The current measles outbreak is deeply troubling, as the [number of cases reported](#) in the U.S. is the highest ever since 1994 and since measles was declared eliminated in 2000. As the summer quickly approaches, it is now more important than ever for camps to take action, and protect their campers and staff from measles and other vaccine preventable diseases.

The American Camp Association (ACA) and the Association for Camp Nursing (ACN) focus on health and safety as a top priority for all camps.

Routine vaccination is important to public health, and camps should require all campers, staff and volunteers to have age-appropriate vaccines as recommended by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and should require documentation of vaccination as well.

Nonmedical exemptions to required immunizations are inappropriate, and these exemptions should be eliminated by camps. Camps should stand with the AAP who views nonmedical exemptions to school-required immunizations as inappropriate for individual, public health, and ethical reasons.

As some individuals may not be able to receive certain vaccines, medically indicated exemptions to specific immunizations should be allowed. These exemptions should be reviewed by each camp's health director on a case-by-case basis.

The majority of people who have contracted measles in the current outbreak were unvaccinated, and a significant factor contributing to the current outbreaks is [misinformation about the safety](#) of the measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine. Some organizations are deliberately targeting these communities with inaccurate and misleading information about vaccines. The MMR vaccine is safe and effective.

Measles is not just a rash and fever that clear up in a few days. Measles can cause [serious health complications](#). Camps should have a low threshold for measles suspicion this summer and should coordinate care with local pediatric offices and emergency departments to evaluate individuals who exhibit symptoms of measles.

The [symptoms of measles](#) generally appear about 7 to 14 days after a person is infected. Measles typically begins with:

- high fever
- cough
- runny nose
- red, watery eyes

Two or three days after symptoms begin, tiny white spots (Koplik spots) may appear inside the mouth. Three to five days after symptoms begin, a rash breaks out.

Requiring campers, staff and volunteers to have age-appropriate vaccines is not an issue of individual rights, but an issue of public health, and camps should take an active role alongside the AAP and CDC to help stop the current measles outbreak and to ensure the health and safety of its participants.

Camps should utilize resources from the [CDC](#) and [AAP](#), as well as the ACA and ACN to help with planning for the current measles outbreak and other vaccine preventable diseases.



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