

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



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DEPARTMENT OF FIRE, RESCUE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

MEMORANDUM

To: All EMS Agencies in Suffolk County

From: Jason Allen Winslow, MD *JAW*
Regional EMS System Medical Director
Suffolk County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services

Date: October 9, 2026

Subject: Measles Advisory for EMS

On October 5th, Governor Hochul made a New York State Disaster declaration regarding a recent increase in the number of cases of measles. These cases of measles have been occurring among children and young adults who have not been immunized against the measles virus. In rural areas of New York there have been 108 confirmed cases of measles through October 3rd.

As of this date, no cases of measles have been reported in Suffolk County in 2026. While there are no current cases of measles in Suffolk County, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services continues to monitor the situation.

Measles cases present as a viral syndrome with fever, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes and a rash of red spots that appears on the face and then spreads over the entire body. This would occur in babies, children and young adults who have not been vaccinated. Last year in 2025 there were 2,289 total cases of measles in the United States and 70% of the cases were in persons less than 19 years of age.

Vaccination against the measles virus is highly effective and is given in two doses at ages 12 - 15 months and ages 4 - 6 years and confers life-long protection.

The key important point for all EMS providers is to specifically ask about vaccination status when caring for a pediatric patient with a viral syndrome during this current measles outbreak – “Is the child currently up to date on vaccinations?” If the answer is yes, then you may resume care as usual. If the answer is “no” or “unsure,” then a possible case of measles may be suspected based on the clinical signs and symptoms.

All EMS providers should don appropriate PPE (N95 mask and gloves, a face shield, eye protection and a gown) when treating a patient with suspected measles. And put a surgical mask on the patient as well if they will tolerate it. Measles is a highly contagious virus that spreads by airborne virus particles that are generated when a person coughs and sneezes. A person may also contact measles if they come into contact with infectious secretions and then touch their own eyes, nose or mouth.

All EMS providers who are already vaccinated for measles (which is part of the MMR vaccine), should be protected by the vaccine. If any EMS providers are not vaccinated, receiving a measles vaccine in two doses is highly recommended.

These two links may be helpful in recognizing a potential measles case:

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/providers/measles/docs/recognizing_measles_fact_sheet.pdf

https://www.cdc.gov/measles/signs-symptoms/photos.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/measles/symptoms/photos.html