

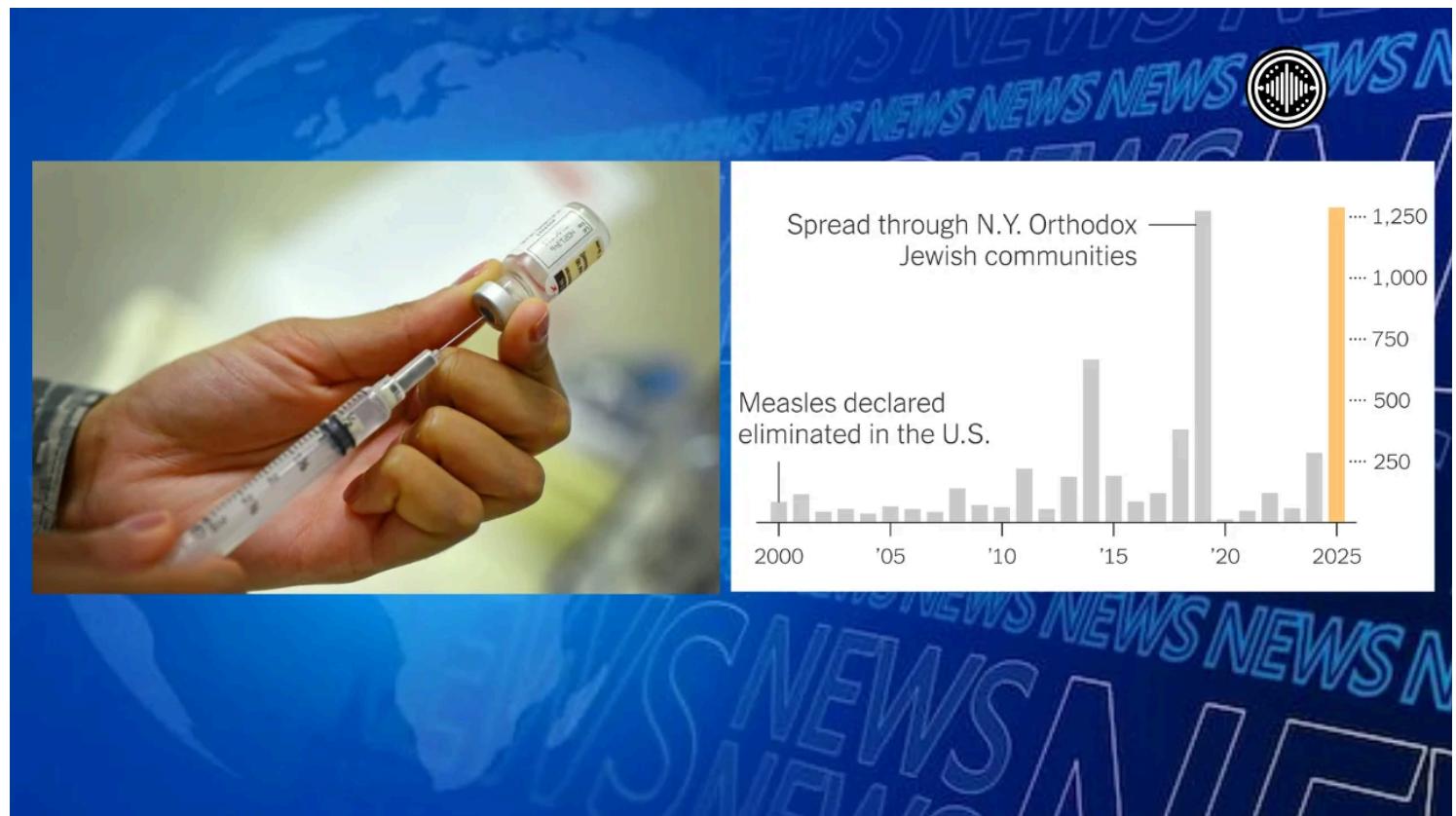
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U.S. Measles Cases Hit 1,288, Highest Since 2000

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Measles, once thought to be eliminated in the United States, has made a troubling comeback. In the first six months of this year alone, health officials reported 1,288 cases, nearly matching the highest count seen since the disease was declared eliminated in 2000.

According to data from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this surge has already surpassed the 1,274 infections documented in all of 2019. Cases have been confirmed in 38 states, with Texas experiencing the largest share at 753,

although this figure has not been independently verified by the CDC as of July 2025. New Mexico and Kansas also reported significant numbers, with 95 and 87 cases, respectively.

Experts attribute much of the resurgence to declining vaccination rates. A recent study showed that vaccination coverage dropped from nearly 94% in 2017-2018 to about 91% in the 2023-2024 school year. This is below the 95% threshold considered necessary for herd immunity, which helps protect communities from outbreaks.

The majority of infections about 92% occurred in unvaccinated individuals. Another 8% of cases involved individuals who had received only one or two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Tragically, three people have reportedly died, and about 13% of all patients required hospitalization, though these numbers may be updated as new data becomes available.

The outbreak is believed to have begun in a rural Mennonite community where vaccination rates were especially low, according to local health departments. From there, the virus spread to other regions, underscoring how quickly measles can move through groups of unvaccinated people.

Measles is considered the most contagious infectious disease known to humans. It spreads through the air via droplets expelled when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Symptoms typically start with a high fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, and red, watery eyes. A red, blotchy rash often appears a few days later.

Before the introduction of the vaccine in 1963, nearly every child in the country contracted measles by age 15. Globally, the disease causes millions of infections annually, leading to hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations and over 100,000 deaths, primarily in countries with low vaccination coverage.

While the CDC emphasized that the risk of infection remains lower in the United States compared to countries like Canada and several European nations, officials urge families not to be complacent. The agency continues to recommend that children receive two doses of the MMR vaccine, which is safe and highly effective.

As measles spreads again, health experts warn that the best protection remains vaccination both for individuals and for communities as a whole.

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