

**Measles
International Travel
Winter Messaging 2014-15**

(For website, educational material, and press release content)

Measles Record High in 2014

- 2014 has been an extraordinary year with [over 600 cases of measles in the U.S.](#) and over 60 cases in California—the highest numbers in 15 years.

Measles Facts

- People with measles usually have a rash, high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. *(See personal stories at the bottom.)*
- Some people with measles also get ear infections, pneumonia, encephalitis, or even die from it.
- Measles is a highly contagious disease. A person can spread measles before feeling sick. The measles virus can remain infectious in a room for two hours after a sick person has left.

How Measles Travels to U.S.

- Measles is a plane ride away. The disease has been at *epidemic levels in the [Philippines](#)* and remains common in Asia Europe, and Africa.
- Most cases of measles in California result from travel to or from overseas countries with high rates of measles.
- Californians not vaccinated against measles are at risk of catching the disease while abroad and then bringing it home to family, friends, and others.
- Infected travelers from other countries can spread measles while visiting the United States.
- Call your doctor if anyone on your trip gets a fever and rash within 3 weeks of returning. Be sure to describe where you traveled.
- Two unvaccinated adults assisting typhoon victims in the Philippines during 2014 initiated an outbreak of 377 persons with measles after they returned home to Ohio. Nine persons were hospitalized.
- In 2014, two siblings who were unvaccinated due to personal beliefs traveled to the Philippines. Upon return to Southern California they became ill and visited their pediatrician. Three people in the waiting room, including a 5-month old infant, caught their measles.

- In 2013, an unvaccinated tourist in India started an outbreak of 24 people with measles upon his return to the U.S. Most were unvaccinated.
- In 2008, a 7-year-old boy from San Diego became infected with measles while travelling to Europe. When he returned home, he unknowingly exposed many people to measles, spreading the disease to 11 unvaccinated children.
- *"Measles is a bad souvenir to bring back to your loved ones."*

Prevent Measles with Vaccination

- The best protection against measles is the MMR vaccine.
- MMR is a safe and effective vaccine that protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella.
- With holiday and winter travel season approaching, talk to your doctor to make sure you and other family members traveling are [up-to-date on your MMR](#) (measles, mumps, rubella) and all other vaccines *before* you travel.
- If needed, the two-dose MMR vaccine series needs to be started 6 weeks before travel to be fully protected. People who are unsure if they have been vaccinated with MMR usually should get vaccinated.
- Babies traveling outside of the United States can get their first dose of MMR vaccine starting at six months of age. Talk with your pediatrician if you are planning an international trip.
- For more information about protecting yourself and others from measles, talk with your doctor or visit www.getimmunizedca.org.
- Here are two personal stories from people affected by measles:



[Rachel's Story](#)



[Dr. Swartzberg's Story](#)