

Do I need a measles vaccine booster during an outbreak?

The measles vaccine is highly protective.

- One dose of the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is 93% effective. This means that out of 100 people who only received one dose, 93 are well protected from measles.
- Getting two doses of the MMR vaccine is even better, at 97% effective.
- A small number of people may not build an effective immune response after only one dose of MMR vaccine. The second dose is given to strengthen that response.

What if I was born before 1957 and have never received the measles vaccine?

- You were most likely exposed to measles and developed immunity from that exposure.

Is there anyone who should get a measles vaccine booster?

- If you are immune compromised, you should discuss with your healthcare provider whether or not you still have immunity to measles. Your healthcare provider can help you determine if you need additional protection.
- A small number of adults who got their measles vaccine between 1963 and 1967 received a different type of vaccine that was not as effective as the current MMR vaccine. If you think you might be part of this group, you should talk with your healthcare provider about getting a dose of the current MMR vaccine.
- If you are someone, such as a healthcare provider, who is at greater risk of encountering measles, you should ensure that you are as protected as possible. This means that if you have not had two doses of the measles vaccine or your vaccine records are unavailable, you should consider getting an additional dose of vaccine. If you've already received two doses and get a third, this won't harm you.
- If you have a young child who has not received two doses of MMR vaccine and you are considering traveling outside the country or to an area where there is a measles outbreak, talk to your healthcare provider about getting them a dose earlier than the recommendation schedule.

The MMR vaccine provides long-lasting protection.

- Once you've received two doses of MMR vaccine, you are considered to be protected for life.
- Your immune system can "remember" getting the vaccine and will produce antibodies to protect you if you are exposed to measles.

If you have questions, contact North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services at 701-328-2378.

Sources: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Your Local Epidemiologist
Updated: 05/09/2025

Public Health Division

600 E Boulevard Ave • Bismarck, ND 58505
701.328.2378 • Toll-free 800.427.2180 • 711 (TTY) • www.hhs.nd.gov