

## Measles outbreak in West Texas

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As of June 28, 2025, the West Texas measles outbreak—originating in Gaines County—has resulted in 750 confirmed cases, 97 hospitalizations, and 2 deaths, both in unvaccinated school-aged children. The outbreak began on January 30, 2025. Of the total cases, 707 occurred in unvaccinated individuals, with only 43 cases among those who had received at least one dose of the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine. Figure 1 displays the outbreak by county in Texas.

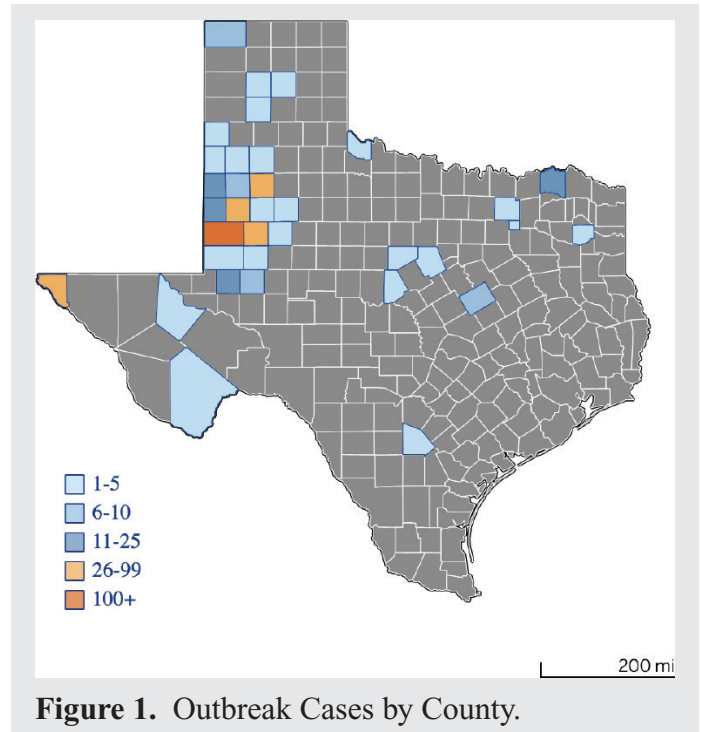
Measles is a highly contagious viral illness caused by a paramyxovirus of the genus *Morbillivirus*, transmitted primarily via respiratory droplets. It has an  $R_0$  of 12–18, making it one of the most contagious infectious diseases known. The virus initially infects the respiratory epithelium and spreads systemically via lymphatic and hematogenous routes, targeting immune cells, which contributes to the profound transient immunosuppression seen in patients.

Clinically, measles presents with a prodrome of high fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis, followed by the appearance of Koplik spots on the buccal mucosa. This is typically followed by a maculopapular rash that starts on the face and spreads downward. Complications may include otitis media, pneumonia, encephalitis, and in rare cases, subacute sclerosing panencephalitis (SSPE).

There is no specific antiviral treatment for measles; management is supportive, focusing on hydration, antipyretics, and nutritional support. Vitamin A supplementation is recommended in children, as it has been shown to reduce morbidity and mortality. Prevention through vaccination remains the most effective public health measure. The MMR vaccine is highly effective, with two doses providing approximately 97% protection.

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**Figure 1.** Outbreak Cases by County.

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