

First U.S. Measles Death in 10 Years Reported in Texas

A measles outbreak in West Texas has led to the first U.S. measles-related death in a decade, with over 130 reported cases across Texas and New Mexico. The outbreak began in early February in a rural Mennonite community in Gaines County, Texas, and has since spread to about ten counties, including nine cases in eastern New Mexico.

The majority of cases involve unvaccinated children. Patients have exhibited high fever, red, watery eyes, nasal congestion, cough, and a facial rash. Treatments have included supplemental oxygen, fever medications, and IV fluids. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), measles has a mortality rate of 1 to 3 deaths per 1,000 cases.

Health officials emphasize the importance of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, particularly in communities with low vaccination rates. Given measles' highly contagious nature, additional cases are expected.

Ensuring children receive the MMR vaccine is crucial in preventing further spread. Communities should stay alert for measles symptoms and seek medical attention if needed. Coordinated efforts between state health departments and the CDC remain essential for managing and containing the outbreak.