

April 11, 2025

## Ontario’s Measles Outbreak Requires Much More Visible & Effective Public Health Response

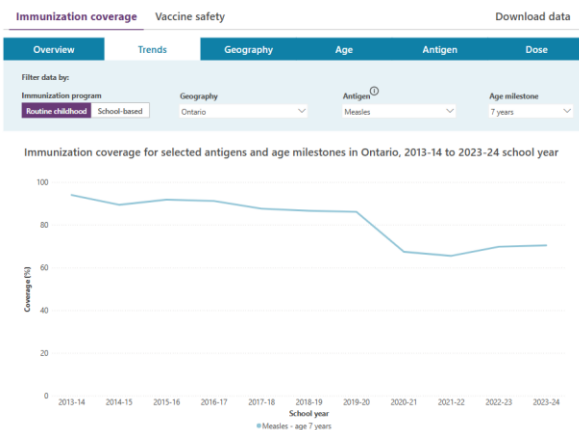
Toronto – The Ontario Health Coalition is raising concerns about the sharp increase in people infected with the measles in Ontario. The data should raise red flags. According to the most recent [epidemiological summary](#) from Public Health Ontario:

- From October 18, 2024 to April 9, 2025, Ontario has reported a total of 816 measles cases (678 confirmed, 138 probable) associated with this outbreak ([Figure 1](#)) occurring in 15 public health units ([Table 1](#)).
- The majority of the identified cases are in the West and Southwestern parts of Ontario but there are also outbreaks in the South East and cases and clusters in the Near North, North, and Hamilton Niagara areas.
- There are 155 new cases since April 3. Among infants, children and adolescents, 92.5% were unimmunized, while among adults, 62.0% (n=124) were unimmunized.

“Ontario’s immunization rates are lower than our peer countries in Europe and are down since 2017,” reported Dr. Dick Zoutman, OHC Board Member, retired infectious disease specialist and Emeritus Professor, School of Medicine, Queen's University, noting that Europe’s vaccination rates for measles are at 91% and countries like Denmark have rates over 93%, compared to Ontario’s 70%. “This is a Public Health failure that must be addressed with the utmost urgency.”

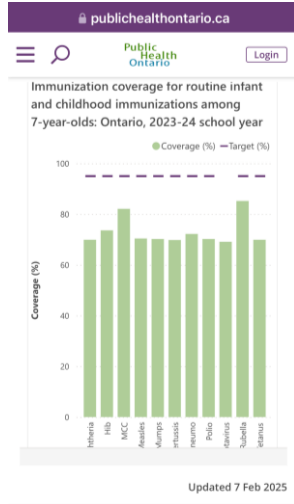
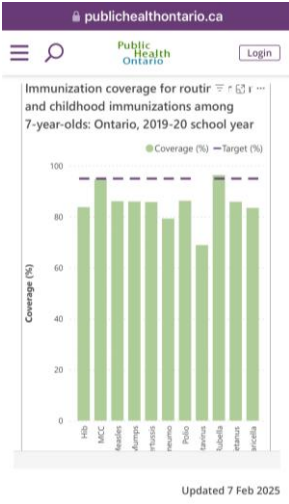
“People are confused as to what they should do. Public Health needs to make clear and highly visible the fact that the virus is airborne and easily transmitted. There are far too many people who are not immunized and the language being used regarding people born before or after 1970 is confusing and unclear for regular people,” said Natalie Mehra, executive director who notes that the Coalition’s members in the Southwest are reporting that some people are wearing masks in public places and doctor’s offices but the information about what people should be doing is not being sufficiently broadcast.

Ontario’s immunization rates are lower than the global average and are down since 2017. This, the Coalition notes, is a Public Health failure that needs to be addressed with the utmost urgency.



Source: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Infectious-Disease/Immunization-Tool>

Ontario is far below its own targets for immunization of school aged children and the rate has declined:



The Coalition is calling on Public Health leaders to give clear and urgent preventative advice, to make clear to the public that the virus is airborne and easily transmitted, and take immediate measures to protect against the spread of measles.

Global data is available here: <https://immunizationdata.who.int/global/wiise-detail-page/measles-vaccination-coverage?CODE=Global&ANTIGEN=MCV2&YEAR=>