



HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

# ERIE COUNTY COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORT

QUARTER 1 (JANUARY - MARCH 2026)

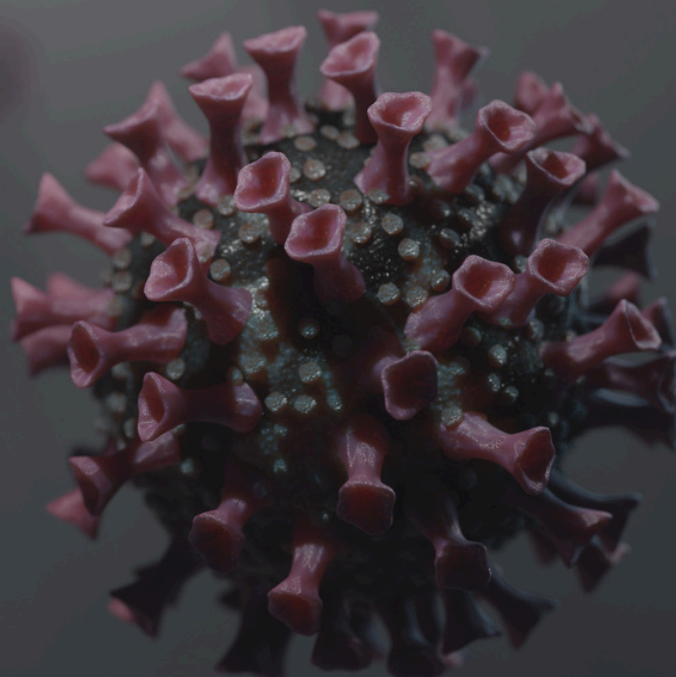
**PREPARED BY:**

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Chief of Epidemiology

# ERIE COUNTY COMMUNICABLE DISEASE STATISTICS\*

|   | JANUARY   | FEBRUARY  | MARCH  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>TOTAL REPORTED COMMUNICABLE DISEASES</b>           | <b>58</b>   | <b>24</b>   | <b>33</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL OUTBREAKS</b>                                | <b>0</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>TOP 5 REPORTED COMMUNICABLE DISEASES PER MONTH</b> | 1. CHLAMYDIA (22)<br>2. INFLUENZA-ASSOCIATED HOSPITALIZATION (20)<br>3. GONORRHEA (4)<br>4. SALMONELLA (2)<br>5. BACTERIAL MENINGITIS (2) | 1. CHLAMYDIA (13)<br>2. INFLUENZA-ASSOCIATED HOSPITALIZATION (8)<br>3. HEPATITIS C (1)<br>4. HEPATITIS B (1)<br>5. STREPTOCOCCAL PNEUMONIAE (1) | 1. CHLAMYDIA (18)<br>2. INFLUENZA-ASSOCIATED HOSPITALIZATION (5)<br>3. SALMONELLA (3)<br>4. STREPTOCOCCAL PNEUMONIAE (1)<br>5. HEPATITIS C (1) |

\*Numbers are preliminary and subject to change



# WHAT'S NEW IN PUBLIC HEALTH?

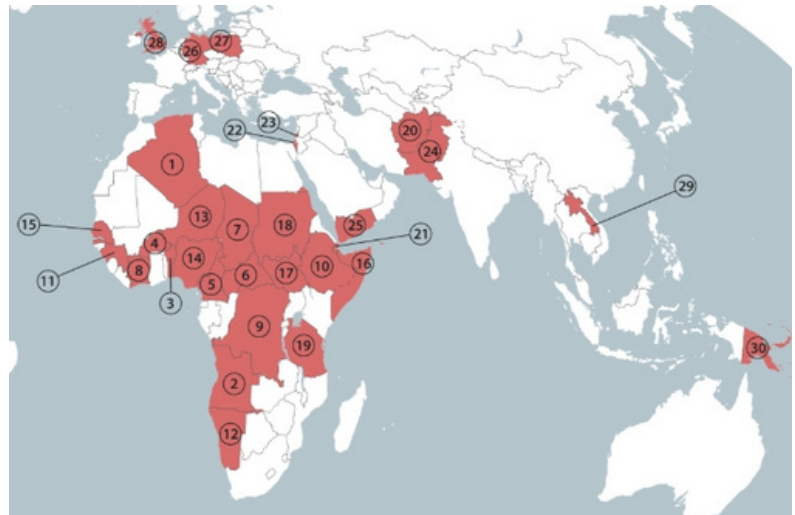
## Polio

The CDC issued a level 2 travel health alert related to Polio in February 2026. A level 2 alert informs individuals traveling to certain locations to use enhanced barrier precautions to avoid contraction of the disease. The alert was issued due to the virus being detected over the past 13 months in countries that do not have regular circulation of the illness. There are 30 countries with this travel alert in place currently.

### What is Polio?

Polio is caused by the virus, *Poliomyelitis*. At first the illness presents with intense gastrointestinal systems like vomiting and diarrhea. The disease also presents with flu-like symptoms at this stage. As the disease progresses, the virus attacks the nerves on the spinal cord leading to paralysis. Some individuals can remain asymptomatic while contagious.

The virus can shed in the stool for several weeks after infection and can be detected for 1-2 weeks in nasopharyngeal secretions.



## Prevention Measures

Individuals can become infected through contaminated food or water. The disease can spread person-to-person as well. Symptoms typically start around 3-6 days after exposure with paralytic symptoms starting around 7-21 days after. There is no cure for polio at this time. Prevention is key to eliminating the virus.

Handwashing is extremely important to prevent polio, because the virus can spread person to person through fecal matter.



The vaccine is about 99% effective at preventing polio in an individual that receives all the recommended doses based on their age and exposure.

### Vaccine Recommendations:

#### **Children:**

It is routinely recommended that children receive 4 doses of polio vaccine starting at ages 2 months followed by 4 months, then 6-18 months, and the last dose between 4 and 6 years.

An accelerated schedule is available for children traveling to areas with known outbreaks or at high risk.

#### **Adults:**

Unvaccinated adults should receive 3 doses of the polio vaccine with the second dose being 1-2 months after the first and the third dose being 6-12 months after the second dose.

An accelerated schedule is available for adults traveling to areas with known outbreaks or at high risk as well.

[Click here to see the recommendations.](#)

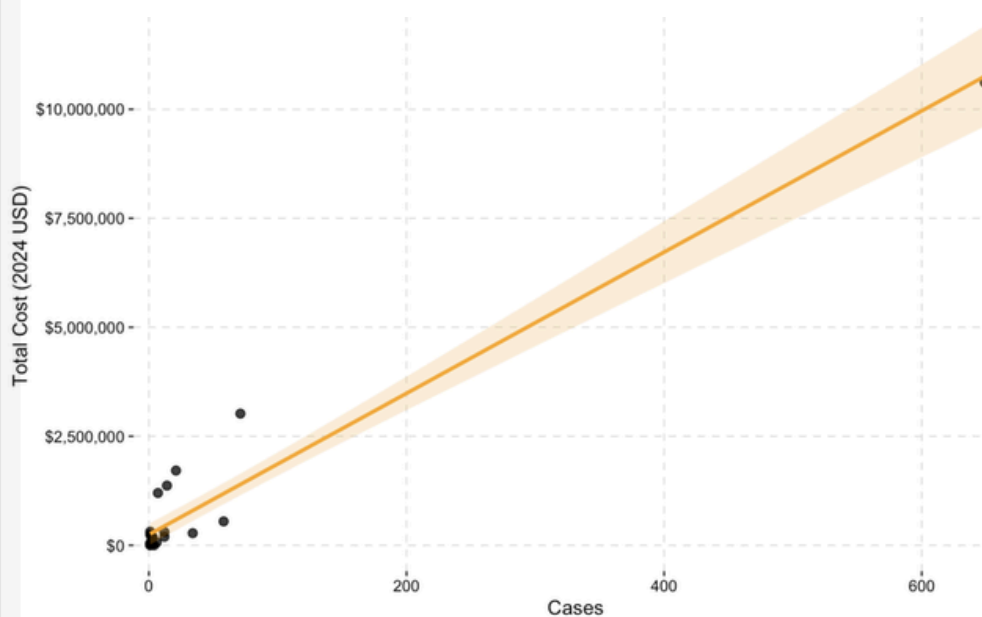
## The Cost of Infectious Disease

Recent individual cases of measles leading to large outbreaks have been trending upwards in the United States in the past few years. This can be attributed to declining vaccination coverage from vaccine hesitancy and mistrust. A sample size of individuals from 2-18 years of age showed that around 79% of Erie County residents had received at least one dose of the MMR vaccine. Sample size includes only patients of ECCHC. Ohio's MMR coverage rate in 2024-2025 was around 88.3%. Measles infects about 9 out of 10 susceptible individuals due to its airborne nature and communicability rate. Herd immunity for measles should be at least 95% vaccine coverage to effectively prevent additional cases or outbreaks.

John's Hopkins showed a recent literature review using data from the United States measles cases in recent years to estimate the cost of the average measles case. It totaled to \$58,591.50. This included cost associated from medical expenses and public health response. Incremental cost per additional case was estimated at about \$16,197.13 ([Sriudomporn & Patenaude, 2025](#)).

### Take Away Findings

The re-emergence of vaccine preventable diseases, impose substantial costs on governments, public health, healthcare, and communities. With an extreme high-cost rate associated with cases and outbreaks, minimizing the frequency and size remain a critical priority area in public health. Strengthening measles vaccination coverage and preparedness for rapid mobilization for containment should be health care providers and public health's focus to eliminate future potential cases.



## Erie County Wireless Emergency Notification System (WENS)

The Erie County Health Department's Office of Epidemiology & Surveillance is responsible for ensuring Erie County's preparedness for a public health emergency, strengthening our ability to respond as a community to all types of public health incidents, and monitoring the overall health of Erie County.

History has shown that quickly alerting the medical community of impending disasters, both physical and biological, can reduce loss of life and improve communication among key responders.

ECHD provides the following types of alerts to our medical community:

- Urgent public health incidents
- Periodic disease alerts
  - Quarterly Communicable Disease Updates
  - Increased Influenza Activity alerts
  - Large foodborne illness outbreak alerts
- Weekly Influenza Reports (during flu season)



Contact Taylor Kula ([tkula@echdohio.org](mailto:tkula@echdohio.org)) for more information!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**Erie County Health Department (419) 626-5623 x5103**  
**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**  
**Ohio Department of Health [www.odh.ohio.gov](http://www.odh.ohio.gov)**