



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE  
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD  
*Commissioner*

April 5, 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Making sure your child is up to date on their vaccinations is critical to keeping them healthy. Vaccines prevent many life-threatening diseases from entering our schools and communities. Currently, there are measles outbreaks in several countries, including the U.S. In 2024, there have been four cases of measles in New York City (NYC). There also has been a recent increase in pertussis (whooping cough) in the U.S. and here in NYC. In 2022, there was even one case of polio in New York State, a dangerous disease that had not been seen in the U.S. since 2013. All these diseases are preventable through routine childhood vaccination.

As the City's doctor and a parent of school-age children, I am asking for your help to make sure our children have the vaccines they need to protect themselves and our communities.

**Please check your child's immunization records and take your child to their health care provider to get any missing vaccines.** If you do not have their records, contact your child's provider so they can tell you if your child is up to date on their vaccinations or which vaccines they still need. You can also visit My Vaccine Record online at [myvaccinerecord.cityofnewyork.us/myrecord](https://myvaccinerecord.cityofnewyork.us/myrecord) to see your child's records if your child was vaccinated in NYC or their provider entered their records from elsewhere. Your child's school can also let you know which vaccines your child still needs for school attendance.

Decreases in measles vaccination rates around the world have led to outbreaks, which have increased the chances of unvaccinated travelers from the U.S. getting sick and spreading the virus when they get home. Measles is extremely contagious but almost entirely preventable by the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine. The MMR vaccine is safe and provides 97% protection against measles after two doses. **If you will be traveling this spring or summer, especially to other countries, make sure your child has had both doses of the MMR vaccine.** Your child's provider may recommend a modified vaccination schedule so your child is protected when traveling.

For information on NYC school vaccination requirements, visit [schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/immunizations](https://schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/immunizations). If you do not have a provider, visit [nychealthandhospitals.org/locations](https://nychealthandhospitals.org/locations) or call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692) to find an NYC Health + Hospitals location near you. You can also visit the NYC Health

Department's Fort Greene Health Center in Brooklyn. Appointments are required: Visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health) and search for [immunization clinics](#) to fill out the online appointment form, or call **311** for questions about scheduling an appointment.

**We encourage you to also talk to your child's provider about other vaccines, such as COVID-19, influenza (flu) and HPV (human papillomavirus),** which, although not required for school attendance, are important in protecting your child's health. Only half of adolescents age 13 are up to date with their HPV vaccination, despite the HPV vaccine being extremely effective at preventing cancers caused by HPV.

We want you and your family to stay healthy this spring and beyond. I encourage you to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Information for Parents and Caregivers webpage at [cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/caregivers](http://cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/caregivers) for more information about vaccination.

I wish you and your family a safe and healthy spring recess.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashwin Vasan', written in a cursive style.

Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD  
Commissioner  
New York City Department of  
Health and Mental Hygiene