

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For More Information Contact**

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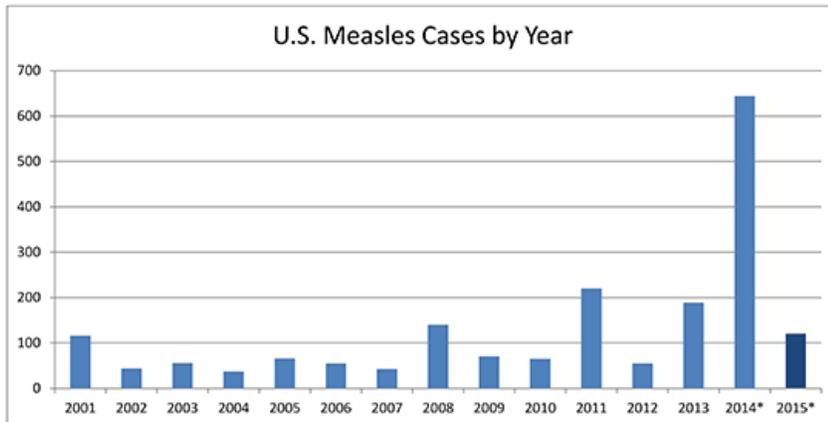
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## **MEASLES: NOT A VACCINE FAILURE, IT'S A FAILURE TO VACCINATE**

(LEBANON, Va.) – The U.S. is currently experiencing a large, multi-state outbreak of measles linked to an amusement park in California. The majority of those getting sick have not been vaccinated. While measles transmission in this country has been very low for many years, it still occurs and in 2014 the U.S. saw a record number of measles cases in recent history.

## **Measles Cases and Outbreaks**

January 1 to February 6, 2015\*



\*Provisional data reported to CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases



At this point, the Commonwealth of Virginia has not identified any cases related to the outbreak originating in California, but that does not mean we are immune. Between 2009 and 2014, 13 cases of measles were reported in Virginia. Six of these individuals were unvaccinated (three of whom were too young to receive vaccine), five were not fully vaccinated, and two were fully vaccinated.

Measles is very contagious and can lead to pneumonia, encephalitis (swelling of the brain) and death. It can be very serious, especially for children younger than 5 years old.

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Measles starts with a fever, followed by a cough, runny nose and red eyes. Then a rash of tiny, red spots breaks out, starting at the head and spreading to the rest of the body. Infected people are contagious to others up to two days before they have any symptoms.

The good news is that measles is preventable with a vaccine. The vaccine is safe and very effective; about 97 percent effective for those receiving the recommended two doses.

VDH urges anyone who is not vaccinated, especially children, to receive the vaccine as soon as possible. Check with your doctor or local health department. Getting the vaccine protects you and those around you, including family and friends who may be too young or unable to receive the vaccine.

For more information, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov) or call the Russell County Health Department at 276-889-7621.

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