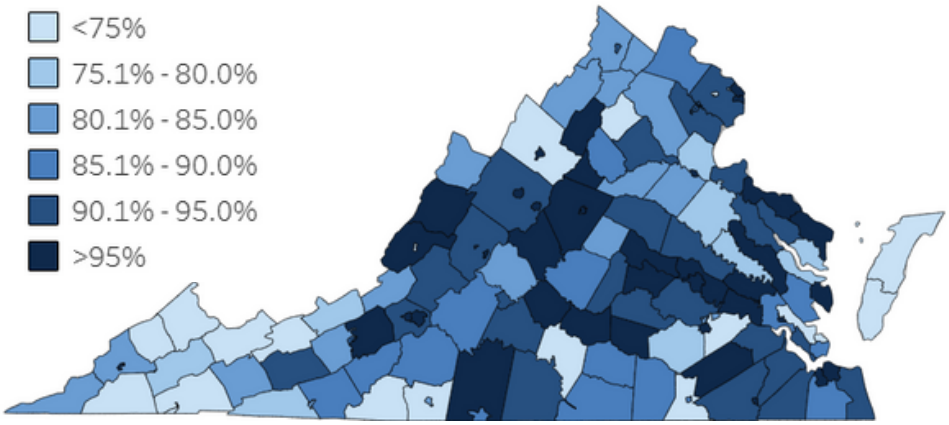
May 09, 2025

Key Takeaways

- Drug overdose deaths and ED visits declined in Virginia last year. Virginia is leading the nation in declines of fentanyl deaths.
- 66 measles cases were reported nationally last week. 31 states have reported cases in 2025.
- Worldpride, expected to attract 2-3 million visitors, will be held in DC May 17 to Jun 8.
- HPAI H5N1 strains currently circulating in dairy cows and wild birds pose a 'moderate' pandemic risk according to a CDC assessment.
- Pertussis cases through mid-April are elevated in Virginia and nationally.

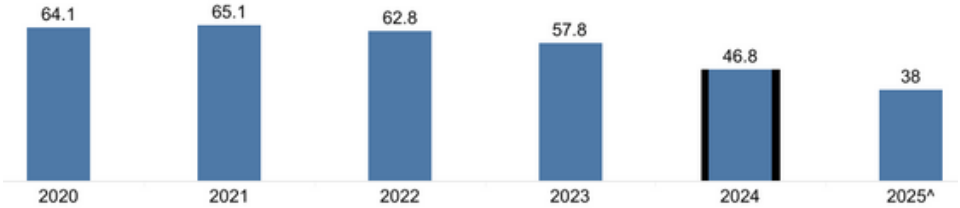
Key Figures

The MMR Vaccination Rate for 5 year olds
At Least One Dose



The Virginia Department of Health's new MMR Vaccine Dashboard provides detailed information on MMR coverage. Coverage varies widely by locality. Most localities do not have the 95%+ coverage needed to prevent measles outbreaks. Image source: VDH.

All Drug Overdose ED Visit Rate in Virginia
Per 10,000 Residents



The Virginia Department of Health's new Drug Overdose Emergency Department Visits Dashboards provides detailed information at the state, region, and local levels. Rates of ED visits for overdose have declined each year since 2021. Image source: VDH.

HPAI H5N1

1,053
HPAI H5N1 detections in US cattle herds as of May 9.

Feb 17
The date when the latest human H5N1 case was reported in the US.

Measles

1,001
Measles cases reported in the US in 2025, across 31 states as of May 8.

Overdose Deaths

44%
Decline in fentanyl overdose deaths in Virginia from 2023 to 2024.

Spotlight:
Overdose Data

This document includes links to publicly available data and news sources. These items are included for situational awareness only and do not represent an endorsement of the source or information therein.

Ongoing Monitored Situations

Measles

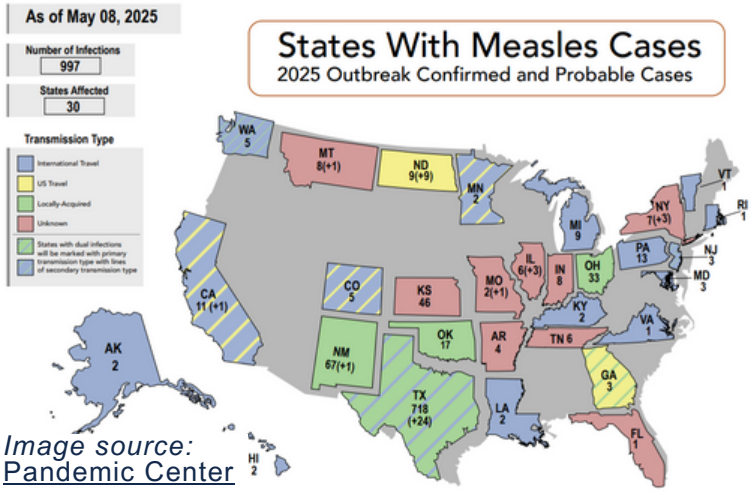


Image source: Pandemic Center

- **The US topped 1,000 measles cases in 2025, with 1,001 cases as of May 8.** The only other year with more cases since 2000, when measles was declared eliminated from the US, was 2019, with 1,274 cases reported that year.
- **Canada has reported 1,177 measles cases in 2025 through Apr 19.** The greater majority of those cases (993) have occurred in Ontario. Europe has reported about 4,500 cases through the end of Mar. Measles cases there are concentrated in Romania (3,203) but France (345), Italy (227), the Netherlands (204) and Spain (202) have also experienced over 200 cases.
- **More than 95% of Virginia's 5 year olds have at least one dose of the MMR series.** However, just 89% of 2 year olds have at least one dose, and only 85% of 7 year olds have completed the 2-dose series. A single dose of MMR vaccine is 93% effective against measles. The 2nd dose is 97% effective and provides lifelong immunity in most people. 95% coverage of the 2-dose vaccine is needed to prevent measles outbreaks.
- **The Oklahoma Department of Health urged school districts to contact families of children with vaccine exemptions** to advise them of the ongoing outbreak, promote vaccination and strengthen health messaging and monitoring.

Avian Influenza

- **A CDC assessment scored two circulating H5N1 strains as a 'moderate' pandemic risk.** The Influenza Risk Assessment Tool was used to examine a B3.13 strain, currently circulating in dairy cattle, and a D1.1 strain currently circulating in wild birds. Both scored in the mid-low range of the moderate category for potential emergence and in the mid-range of the moderate category for potential public health impact.
- **A study in ferrets found airborne transmission** of an H5N1 strain isolated from an infected dairy worker. 50% of H5N1-naive ferrets were infected in the non-contact (airborne) group, compared to 100% in the contact group.
- **A study found that bovine H5N1 caused asymptomatic cases and limited transmission in pigs.** All infected pigs had asymptomatic or mild disease. 2 of 4 H5N1-naive pigs housed with infected caged mates developed antibodies. The authors note that asymptomatic spread among swine may pose a risk.

Seasonal Illness

- **GI illness is at or below threshold statewide and in all regions of Virginia.** Respiratory illness is minimal statewide, and is low or minimal in all regions of Virginia. However, test positivity for rhinovirus/enterovirus and human metapneumovirus is increasing nationally.
- **The CDC estimates there were 610,000 hospitalizations and 26,000 deaths from flu** so far this season. There were 216 pediatric deaths thus far, exceeding the previous high for a non-pandemic season. The 2024-2025 season is classified as high severity, overall and for all age groups.
- **The CDC reports 9,034 pertussis cases through Apr 26, 2025,** compared to 4,698 reported in the same period in 2024. There were 207 reported in Virginia, more than twice the 2024 number.

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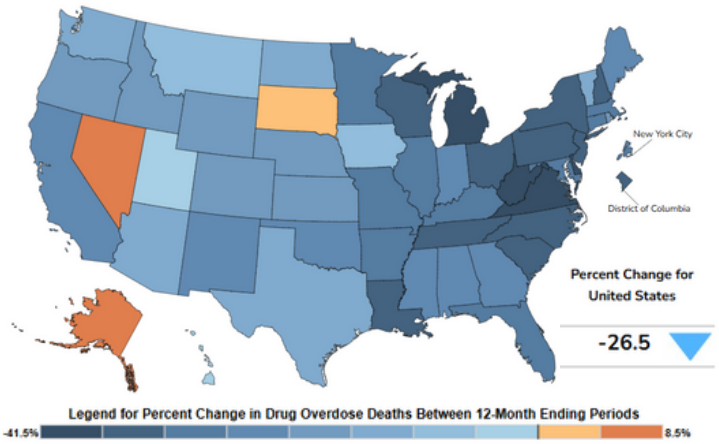
Spotlight

Change in 12 month-ending Drug Overdose Deaths
Nov 2023 to Nov 2024



Drug overdose deaths in Virginia dropped 41.5%, compared to 26.5% nationally, based on CDC estimates from preliminary data for the 12-month period ending in Nov. Virginia had the largest drop of any state. Delaware (38.7%), West Virginia (37.8%), Michigan (36.5%) and North Carolina (35.7%) rounded out the top 5. Image source: CDC

Overdose Data

- **The Governor's Office announced a record reduction in fentanyl overdose deaths in Virginia.** Based on preliminary data, 2024 fentanyl overdose deaths in Virginia fell by 44% over 2023, and are down 46 percent since the peak in 2021. Overdoses from all drugs dropped 34% in 2024, and all drug classes saw notable declines.
- **Overdose visit rates per 10,000 emergency department visits also declined in 2024**, a trend that has continued into 2025. VDH has redesigned and updated its Emergency Department Visits for Drug Overdose dashboard, providing up-to-date regional and local insights.
- **The number of patients diagnosed with drug use disorder at Virginia hospitals increased by 11.3% from 2020 to 2024** according to a VHHA analysis. 27% of these also involved diagnoses for mental diseases and disorders.

Other News

- **Washington DC will host an international pride celebration May 17 to June 8.** Worldpride consists of a series of events culminating in a march and rally on June 8. Organizers expected 2 to 3 million visitors, but attendance may be subdued due to security and other concerns.
- **Brazilian police prevented a planned bomb attack on a large concert in Rio de Janeiro**. The attackers planned to target children, adolescents and the LGBTQIA+ community according to police.
- **LA County CA declared a hepatitis A outbreak.** 29 cases were reported in Q1 2025, doubling the total for the same period in 2024. 2024 cases were also elevated, more than twice the number seen in 2023.
- **5 prison guards were injured in a premeditated attack** at Wallens Ridge state prison in Big Stone Gap. Three were transported to the hospital but have since been released.
- **The majority of Americans trust local health departments and federal public health agencies.** However, most are not confident they can carry out key tasks such as responding to outbreaks or regulating drugs and vaccines. Like the Harvard Chan survey released last week, the KFF survey also found stark partisan differences.
- **Workers at 51 CT nursing homes may strike on May 19.** The facilities have secured traveling workers in case of a strike. This follows similar actions in New York last month.
- **More than half of National Weather Service forecast offices have 20% vacancy rates.** Some offices have ceased or reduced weather balloon launches. One office has ceased 24/7 operations, and more may follow. Experts warn that cuts to radar repair staff may lead to outages.
- **America's Poison Centers issued a warning regarding misinformation** from social media, artificial intelligence, and other internet sources.

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