

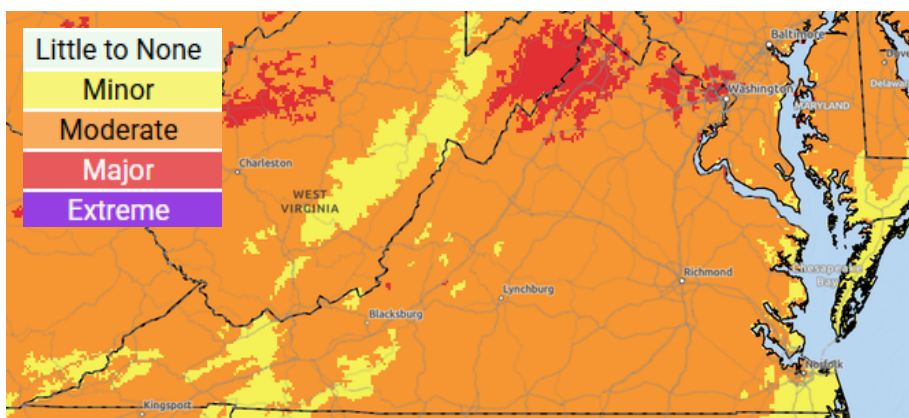
May 15, 2026

Key Takeaways

- Gastrointestinal illness remains above threshold in Virginia. Nationally, common cold viruses are increasing and gastrointestinal illness remains elevated.
- Virginia declared a measles outbreak in Buckingham county, with 12 cases reported so far.
- Virginia joined 19 other states in the top tier for public health emergency preparedness in the *2026 Ready or Not* report.
- The Africa CDC announced an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Key Figures

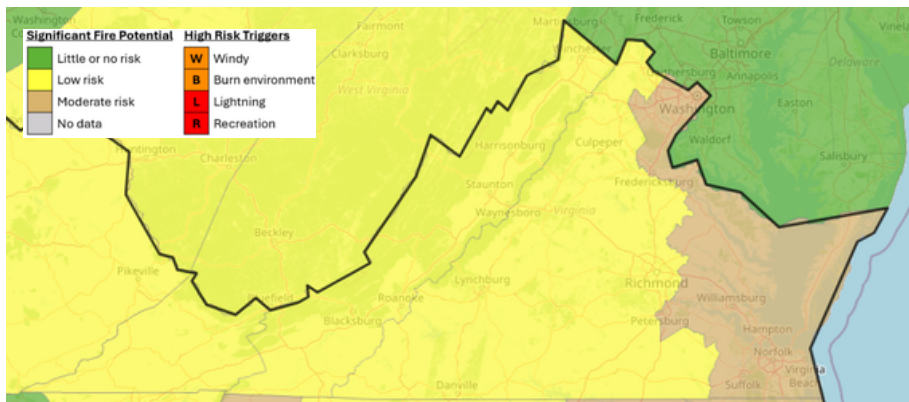
NWS HeatRisk, May 19



HeatRisk returns to Virginia next week. During May 1 - 10, there were 23 heat-related emergency visits in Virginia.

Image Source: [NWS](#)

Significant Fire Potential, May 18



Along with heat, fire weather is returning to Virginia next week.

Image source: [NICC](#)

Measles

51

Measles cases confirmed nationally in the week ending May 7.

12

New measles cases confirmed in Virginia in the past week.

Drought

97%

The share of Virginia experiencing severe or extreme drought.

26%

The share of Virginia experiencing extreme drought.

Key Dates

June 1

The Atlantic Hurricane Season begins.

June 11

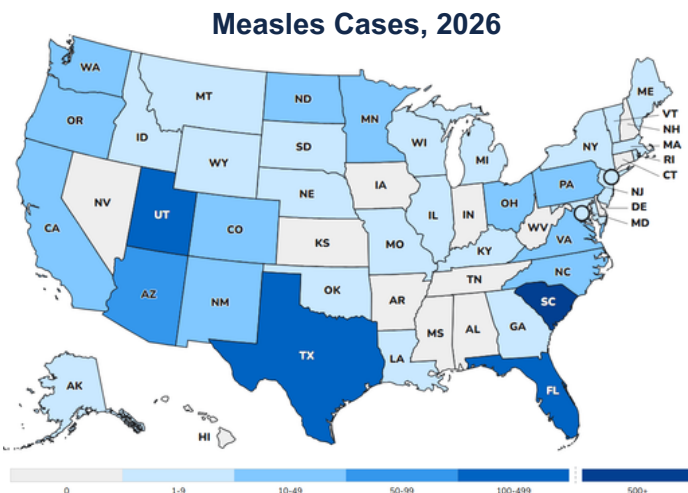
The FIFA World Cup begins.

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Ongoing Monitored Situations

Measles

- The CDC reported **51 new measles cases in the US over the past week**, bringing the 2026 total to 1,893 cases across 38 US states and Washington, DC. Canada reported 45 new cases last week. Mexico's report is delayed this week.
- Virginia reported a **measles outbreak with 12 cases in Buckingham county**. None of the patients reported recent travel and local transmission is suspected. There are likely more cases than have been reported.
- Utah added **17 new cases last week** and Pennsylvania added **9**. Outside of those two states and Virginia, no state added more than 4.



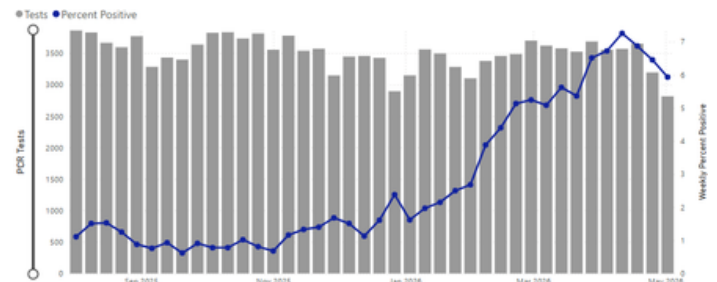
5 US states have reported over 50 measles cases this year (South Carolina, Utah, Texas, Florida & Arizona). Image Source: [CDC](#)

Zoonotic Influenza

- The CDC reported serological evidence of a **veterinary worker HPAI A(H5N1) infection after exposure to infected domestic cats**. 139 persons were exposed during a Nov 2024 to Jan 2025 outbreak in Los Angeles among cats, linked to raw animal products. 30 exposed persons reported symptoms, but no infections were detected during the outbreak. 25 people later underwent serologic testing, with 1 testing positive.
- Nebraska reported an **influenza A(H1N2) variant (y) human infection**. A(H1N2) normally circulates in swine but no contact with swine was identified. This is the second A(H1N2) infection reported during the 2025-26 flu season. The patient, who is under 18 years old, developed symptoms and sought healthcare in April, but was not hospitalized and recovered.

Seasonal Illness

Rotavirus Weekly Test and Percent Positivity
CDC NREVSS - National



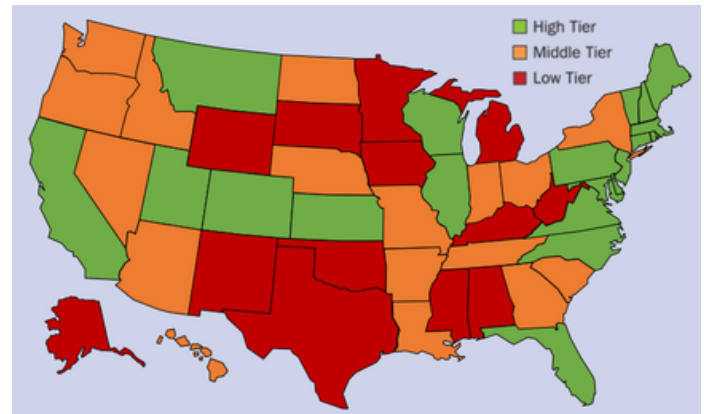
Nationally, norovirus and rotavirus test positivity remains elevated. Rotavirus positivity peaked in April and has begun to decline. Image Source: [CDC](#)

- In Virginia, overall respiratory activity is **minimal and stable**, accounting for 10.2% of ED visits, up from 9.9% last week. Flu, COVID-19 and RSV activity are all low and stable. **Nationally, respiratory illness activity is very low**. However, test positivity for common cold viruses (RV/EV) is increasing.
- **Gastrointestinal illness is at or below threshold in Virginia**, accounting for 10.5% of ED visits, down from 10.7% last week. GI illness is above threshold in Central and Southwest Virginia.
- **Reduced rotavirus vaccine coverage would increase childhood hospitalizations**. Researchers estimate that a drop to 60% coverage, from the current 75%, would result in 85,000 additional hospitalizations over 5 years, while a drop to 20% would add 204,000. The CDC changed its rotavirus vaccine recommendation to shared clinical decision-making, though that change is currently stayed by court order.

Other News

- The Africa CDC announced an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo. There are 246 suspected cases and 65 deaths reported in the outbreak so far. Although the outbreak is in a remote area, it is in a conflict zone that has seen population displacement, and is close to the border with Uganda and South Sudan.
- US overdose deaths dropped 14% nationally from 2024 to 2025 according to estimates from preliminary data. It was the third straight annual drop. Overdose deaths in Virginia dropped 19%.
- 18% of tested students and staff in a San Francisco high school tested positive for tuberculosis. Of 252 positive results, just 7 were active, while 241 were latent TB, with 4 pending. The ongoing outbreak began last fall.

2026 State Public Health Emergency Preparedness Rankings

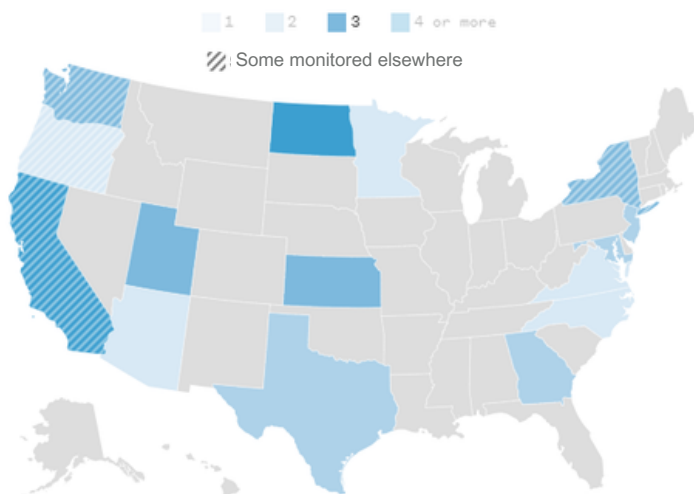


Virginia remained in the top performance tier in the Trust for America's Health Ready or Not 2026 report on public health preparedness. The report noted reductions in federal and state funding and workforce instability as top areas for improvement nationally.

Image Source: TFAH

Spotlight

US Residents on MV Hondius and Close Contacts



At least 25 US residents from 14 US states have returned from the MV Hondius. 18 were repatriated from Spain and are now being monitored in either the National Quarantine Unit in Nebraska, or at Emory University in Georgia. 7 who left the ship prior to the outbreak declaration, along with several others exposed during flights, are under monitoring by state health authorities.

The risk to the public is extremely low.

Image Source: Today

Hantavirus Outbreak

- The WHO reports 10 cases linked to the hantavirus outbreak on the MV Hondius, including 3 deaths. 8 cases are confirmed and 2 are probable. An additional US resident with no symptoms received a positive PCR result, but subsequent tests were negative. A flight attendant who developed mild symptoms after assisting a confirmed case also tested negative. All cases were passengers on the cruise ship.
- The risk to the public from the outbreak is low. The WHO rates the risk to the global population as low, while the CDC rated the risk to the public in the US as extremely low. VDH rates the risk to Virginia as very low. Human-to-human transmission from the Andes strain occurs, but is rare, and generally requires close contact for an extended period of time. The cruise ship setting likely facilitated transmission in this outbreak.
- The attention-grabbing outbreak has spawned widespread misinformation. Much of it is built on platforms and themes developed during COVID-19, now enhanced with AI images and videos.