



To: Healthcare Facilities, Local Health Departments, Providers

From: New York State Department of Health

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HEALTH ADVISORY

Preparing for Health Risks Associated with Mass Gatherings in New York State and the Surrounding Region during Summer 2026

Please distribute to: Medical Directors, Nursing Directors, Clinic Directors, Emergency Department, Urgent Care, Infection Preventionists, Hospital Epidemiologists, Physicians

SUMMARY

- Large events in New York State (NYS) and the surrounding region during the summer are expected to attract large crowds and a surge in tourism. These events include but are not limited to:
 - the 2026 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, with games in the New Jersey/New York City metro area and Toronto, Canada and with watch parties and fan zones throughout NYS,
 - America's 250th Independence Day celebrations throughout New York State,
 - the U.S. Open golf tournament in Suffolk County,
 - Jones Beach air show in Nassau County, and
 - Fleet Week New York 2026 in Manhattan.
- Attendees of these events will include NYS residents and visitors from other states and countries who may travel widely throughout New York State and elsewhere before and/or after attending an event or travel through the state on their way to/from an event.
- Healthcare providers should anticipate possible increases in communicable diseases and heat-related illnesses and regional surges in healthcare-seeking behavior.
- Whenever potentially clinically relevant, healthcare providers should take a detailed travel history and ask about vaccination history.
- Additional advisories will be disseminated throughout the summer season if/when issues of public health concern are identified.

BACKGROUND

While tourism in New York always peaks in summer, the summer of 2026 is expected to have much larger event-driven tourism, which raises the level of concern for increased communicable disease, heat-related illness, and health care utilization.

Typical summer increases in [food-borne disease](#) ([salmonellosis](#), [cyclosporiasis](#)) and water-borne disease ([vibriosis](#), [legionellosis](#)), as well as [heat-related illness](#) (heat exhaustion, heat stroke) are expected.

In general, **the overwhelming majority of infections this summer, including those in international travelers, are likely to be common infections that are routinely seen in NYS**, such as viral respiratory infections and food- or water-borne diseases. Viral respiratory infections might include **influenza**; although influenza season has ended in NYS and the rest of the Northern Hemisphere, it is just starting in the Southern Hemisphere. Additionally, travelers might present with infections such as malaria or tuberculosis that are more common internationally.

Recent global communicable disease trends might increase concern about certain diseases:

- **Measles** continues to be found worldwide, with a very large outbreak currently in Bangladesh and other outbreaks in Canada, Guatemala, Mexico, Israel, and Japan. In the United States, several states (including New York) have reported cases recently, with the highest number coming from Virginia. More about measles can be found [here](#). **Measles is transmissible before the rash develops**; the prodrome can include fever, cough, runny nose, and conjunctivitis. Koplik spots, while pathognomonic, are not always seen. Measles virus can remain in the air and infectious for several hours after an infected individual has left the area. It is extremely important to **consider measles and ask about vaccination status**, even if the individual does not report travel to areas with known outbreaks.
- The **Bundibugyo Ebola** outbreak continues, as of the date of this advisory primarily in the Democratic Republic of the Congo but also in Uganda. South Sudan is an area of concern as well. There have been over 600 cases in this region, with over 120 deaths. Transmission of Ebola requires contact with bodily fluids of a symptomatic individual. Travelers leaving affected countries are being screened to minimize the possibility of an infected individual leaving the country, and passengers from affected countries are screened upon arrival in the U.S. Although the risk to the U.S. is low, **take a detailed travel history with particular reference to currently impacted countries and regions within those countries**, and contact the local health department or the New York State Department of Health for concerning illnesses in individuals at risk, bearing in mind that common, routine infections are much more likely (e.g., influenza, malaria). More information can be found [here](#).
- **Polio**: In 2026, there have been cases of paralytic polio reported by 13 countries; 10 of which were in Africa. Environmental sampling has detected poliovirus in an additional 5 countries, suggesting undetected transmission. There was one case of paralytic polio in NYS in 2022, acquired in NYS after contact with international travelers. Please **ask about vaccination status and contact your local health department or the New York State Department of Health immediately regarding individuals presenting with acute flaccid paralysis**. More information about polio can be found [here](#).
- **Mpox**: There have been more than 55,000 cases of clade I Mpox since January 2024. Only a small proportion of cases were exported from central or eastern African countries. There have been over 900 clade I and clade II cases reported from 11 different countries in Europe, predominantly in men who have sex with men. There have now been more than 20 clade I mpox cases in the United States, and all were associated with travel to areas where outbreaks are ongoing or contact with people who had traveled to these

areas. Vaccination remains an important tool in stopping the spread of mpox. More on mpox can be found [here](#).

- **New World screwworm** has been slowly moving north from Central America. Livestock and domesticated animals in Texas and New Mexico have been identified with New World screwworm in the past week. New World screwworm maggots burrow deep into and consume the live flesh of the host. While there is great concern about livestock infestations in the southern United States and human infestations have occurred, New World screwworm is unlikely to commonly infest humans. However, if health care providers treat a traveler from an area with New World screwworm cases with a wound with fly larvae or eggs, contact your local health department and **do not dispose of larvae or eggs in the trash or outside**. Place them in a container with 70% ethanol (or $\geq 70\%$ isopropanol) and retain for identification. More on New World screwworm can be found [here](#).
- **Andes hantavirus** in passengers on the *MV Hondius* adventure cruise has been in the headlines. This South American hantavirus is the only one that is transmissible from person to person. There have been 13 cases associated with this outbreak, all passengers on board the ship. Passengers have been in quarantine, which ends on June 21. There are typically 100-200 Andes virus cases identified per year, primarily in Argentina with some in Chile. The cruise ship outbreak does not change the very low risk of Andes virus infection in travelers from those areas. More on hantavirus can be found [here](#).

Should you wish to keep up with disease-related events around the world, the Department publishes a weekly summary, the [Global Health Update](#).

SURVEILLANCE AND REPORTING

Surveillance for communicable diseases and conditions reportable in New York State will continue as usual. The list of diseases and conditions that are reportable in New York State can be found [here](#). In addition, any unusual disease with unknown etiology is reportable, as are clusters or outbreaks of any communicable disease.

To report a communicable disease, please [call your local health department](#) or the New York State Department of Health's Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at (518) 473-4439 or, after hours, at 1 (866) 881-2809; to obtain reporting forms (DOH-389), call (518) 402-5012. In New York City, call 1 (866) NYC-DOH1 (1-866-692-3641) for additional information. Health care personnel in New York City should use the [downloadable Universal Reporting Form \(PD-16\)](#); those belonging to NYC MED can [complete and submit the form online](#).

In anticipation of this summer's events, NYS has reinforced established relationships with contacts in Canada and with state health departments throughout the region and initiated enhanced surveillance activities including real-time monitoring of syndromic surveillance system queries for acute respiratory, rash, fever, gastrointestinal, neurological, and measles syndromes.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Providers should expect to treat common illnesses seen in both travelers and non-travelers, while maintaining vigilance for illnesses such as measles and for novel or high-consequence pathogens rarely seen in the United States. This includes:

- Staying up to date on global infectious disease trends. Information can be found [here](#), including a button to subscribe to the Department's weekly Global Health Update.
- Reviewing and implementing triage procedures to immediately isolate patients when appropriate, especially if measles or any other highly communicable disease is suspected.
- Collecting a detailed history from patients including:
 - Attendance at crowded events
 - Recent travel both outside of and within the United States
 - Vaccination history
 - For non-U.S. based patients, collect local contact information, including the location where the patient is staying while in the United States, phone numbers while in the U.S., and credentials for messaging apps such as Signal or WhatsApp.
 - Information regarding contact with persons who are or have been ill
- Performing appropriate clinical testing for common illnesses, including those suspected to be caused by:
 - Foodborne pathogens
 - Respiratory pathogens including influenza virus
 - Vaccine-preventable diseases, especially measles or polio
 - Zoonotic and vectorborne pathogens, including Lyme disease, chikungunya, and malaria
 - Sexually-transmitted infections. The Department's AIDS Institute distributed an [advisory](#) to stress the importance of recognizing, diagnosing, and treating [sexually transmitted infections](#).

Healthcare providers are trusted voices and play an important role in ensuring that their patients remain healthy. To that end, providers should educate patients attending large gatherings about the importance of:

- Staying hydrated
- Proper use of sunscreen and tick and mosquito repellants
 - Apply sunscreen first and repellent second
- Respiratory etiquette
- Hand hygiene
- Maintaining sexual health

Healthcare providers should anticipate increased presentations for **heat-related illness** during periods of elevated temperatures, particularly among individuals attending outdoor events and mass gatherings. Heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, and exacerbations of underlying medical conditions may occur, especially among older adults, young children, pregnant individuals, outdoor workers, and people with chronic medical conditions. In addition:

- Detailed patient histories should also include asking about medications or drug use that can impair thermoregulation
- Providers can encourage patients to remain hydrated and seek air-conditioned environments or utilize available community cooling resources when needed

For more information

- If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your local health department or the New York State Department of Health Bureau of Communicable Disease Control at (518) 473-4439 or via email at bcdc@health.ny.gov.
- Summaries of select ongoing and emerging infectious disease outbreaks both globally and in the United States can be found in the [Global Health Update Report](#) released by New York State Department of Health every Friday.
- Questions about infection prevention and control in hospitals, nursing homes, and diagnostic and treatment centers should be directed to the Department's Bureau of Healthcare Associated Infections at 518-474-1142 and icp@health.ny.gov.

RESOURCES

- [Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases](#)
- [Mosquitoes and Disease](#)
- [Tanning and Sun Safety](#)
- [Foodborne & Waterborne Illnesses](#)
- [Measles](#)
- [Polio](#)
- [New York State Laboratory Reporting of Communicable Diseases](#)
- [Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)
- [Extreme Heat](#)