



Children Hospitalized With Vitamin A Poisoning After RFK Jr. Endorses Supplement as Measles Treatment

Children in Texas and New Mexico are being treated for measles and vitamin A toxicity, which can cause severe liver damage.

April 7, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

In the wake of Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s promotion of [vitamin A](#) as a treatment for [measles](#), Texas and New Mexico hospitals are treating numerous [children](#) for vitamin A toxicity, which can cause abnormal [liver function](#) and other adverse health effects, [CNN reports](#).

Kennedy has long described the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) [vaccine](#) as dangerous and downplayed the severity of measles risk.

As of April 3, 22 U.S. jurisdictions reported a total of 607 confirmed measles cases, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). About 196 (32%) confirmed cases are in children under 5 years old, and 97% involve unvaccinated individuals.

The measles outbreak has affected at least [481 people in Texas](#), [54 in New Mexico](#) and [24 in Kansas](#).

Until recently, RFK Jr. has centered his response to the outbreak on vitamin A, even suggesting that it could function "as a prophylaxis" for the virus, despite no evidence, according to CNN.

After the [death of a second young child in Texas](#) who was not vaccinated and died of a measles-related illness, [Kennedy visited West Texas](#) and has since publicly changed his stance on MMR vaccination.

“The most effective way to prevent the spread of measles is the MMR vaccine,” he [wrote via X](#). “I’ve spoken to Governor Abbott, and I’ve offered HHS’ continued support. At his request, we have redeployed CDC teams to Texas.”

This pivot comes too little for the various children with vitamin A toxicity hospitalized at Covent Children’s Hospital in Lubbock, Texas, all of whom were unvaccinated, according to CNN.

Vitamin A plays an important role in immunity, vision and growth, but when a person takes too much, it can accumulate in organs like the liver and lead to adverse health effects, including liver injury, [cirrhosis](#), [fibrosis](#), jaundice and more.

Indeed, even a single large dose (over 200,000 mcg) of vitamin A can cause nausea, vomiting, vertigo and blurry vision, according to the [Mayo Clinic](#). What’s more, taking more than 3,000 mcg of daily oral vitamin A supplements can cause long-term damage including:

- Bone thinning
- Liver damage
- Headache
- Skin irritation
- Pain in the joints and bone
- Birth defects in pregnant women.

In a hospital setting, vitamin A can be useful for measles support in people who have a specific deficiency, but most evidence of this comes from low-income countries where such a deficiency is common, according to CNN. Because the children being treated in West Texas are generally healthy, experts say the benefits of vitamin A supplementation in their case are unclear.

The Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN) [released a statement warning parents](#) against using high doses of vitamin A as measles prevention for children.

“While vitamin A plays an important role in supporting overall immune function, research hasn’t established its effectiveness in preventing measles infection. CRN is concerned about reports of high-dose vitamin A being used inappropriately, especially in children,” the statement reads.

The MMR vaccine is very safe and effective at preventing measles, mumps and rubella. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are 97% effective against measles and 86% effective against mumps, [according to the CDC](#).

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