



Resurgence of Measles in Texas:

Clinical Considerations for McLennan County Physicians



William McCunniff, MD.

Earlier this month Influenza A was prevalent at greater levels than we have had in the last 15 years according to the CDC; however, Texas physicians are now being faced with increasing levels of measles (rubeola) in our state at higher levels than any other in the last 30 years. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, there is a measles outbreak in the South Plains region of Texas with 124 cases confirmed since late January – with all but 5 of those individuals being unvaccinated. 80 of these cases have

been in Gaines County, and 39 between the ages of 0-4 and 62 between the ages of 5-17.

Multiple factors are contributing to the most current outbreak including a continued decline in vaccination rates across the United States. The MMR vaccine was released in 1971; however, recent years have seen declining vaccination rates influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the highly contagious nature of the virus along with a prolonged incubation period of 10-12 days after exposure compound the severity of measles outbreaks. According to the Mayo Clinic, “about 90% of people who haven’t had measles or been vaccinated against measles will become infected when exposed to someone with the measles virus.”

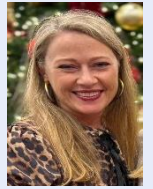
Measles is caused by a RNA virus and transmitted by infectious droplets and aerosolization. Classic symptoms involve the “3 C’s: cough, coryza and conjunctivitis.” High fever up to 104° F is an early symptom and after around 4 days, an erythematous, maculopapular rash appears on the face and spreads downwards to the rest of the body. Koplik spots (white tiny spots on the oral mucosa) typically appear 2-3 days after the first symptoms. Contagiousness is present from 4 days prior to appearance of the rash until 4 days afterwards. The virus remains active and contagious in the air or on infected surfaces for up to two hours.

If you are concerned you may be encountering a patient with measles in your clinic, please follow the protocols and guidelines as directed by your facility. In addition, place a mask on the patient while keeping them isolated in an exam room, ideally with negative pressure if possible. Patients with rash and fever should ideally wait in a separate waiting area. Contact our local health department at (254) 750-5450 to report any suspected case and for further guidance on testing. Options for testing include a nasopharyngeal or throat swab for reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction and potentially measles immunoglobulins in some cases. Self-isolation for the patient is important while awaiting results.

Treatment involves relieving symptoms with over-the-counter pain relievers and focusing on rest and hydration. Approximately 1 in 4 people who contract measles will ultimately need to be hospitalized. Common complications include ear infections and diarrhea while much more serious complications include pneumonia and encephalitis. Infants, pregnant women and immunosuppressed individuals are at highest risk for complications from measles. Confirming vaccination status remains a priority for people of all ages. The two-dose MMR vaccine is typically given when a child is 12-15 months old and the second when they are 4-6 years old. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are highly effective in preventing measles at 97%. Those born after 1957 and vaccinated before 1968 should discuss their vaccination status with their physician due to risk for insufficient immunity secondary to a less effective vaccine used during this time. (**Article written by Dr. William McCunniff, MD, MBA**)

From MCMS Executive Director

Last day to **RENEW** your **TMA membership** is **MARCH 1st**. If you have any questions about membership and benefits of the TMA, email [MCMS](mailto:MCMS@mcclennancountymedicine.org) at admin@mcclennancountymedicine.org.



**Nomination
Deadline for 2025
Gold-Headed Cane
Award is March
21st!**

Important Resources

- [Life Bridge](#)-Physician Wellness Support
- [TMLT Malpractice](#)
- [Texas Medical Association \(TMA\)](#)
- [Lone Star Caucus](#)
- [MCMS Website](#)

Mark Your Calendars

- **First Tuesdays**
 - 04 MAR 2025
 - **01 APR 2025***
 - 06 MAY 2025
- (*April 2025 will be an MCMS organized group trip. Stay tuned for details).
- **ANNUAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UPDATE FOR PRIMARY CARE: ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS** hosted by Waco Family Medicine
 - 29 MARCH 2025
- [Register Now!](#)**
(up to 6 CE/CME and 1 Ethics credit)
- **MCMS “Walk with a Doc”**
 - 19 APRIL 2025

TEXAS LEGISLATURE IS IN SESSION



2024 Legislative Update Provided By Dr. Robert Wolf

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

Key Points: **1.** The 89th Texas Legislature began on January 14, 2025. **2.** Sine die, the last day of the Legislature is June 2, 2025. **3.** McLennan County is represented by **Pat Curry** and **Angelia Orr** in the Texas House of Representatives and by **Brian Birdwell** in the Texas Senate. **4.** All representatives serve on key committees that influence medical legislation.

Priorities: **1.** TMA has formulated a list of the top 10 priorities for advocacy. **2.** These range from stopping scope of practice expansion, access to care, enhanced Medicaid payments to prior authorization, network adequacy, and preserving physician autonomy. **3.** Safeguarding medical liability protections (Tort reform - House Bill 4 78th Texas Legislature 2003, Proposition 12 amended Texas constitution Sept.13, 2003).

What You Can Do: **1.** Read the daily Texas Medicine Today updates. Things can move quickly in Austin so many of these updates are time sensitive. **2.** Respond to legislative alerts. Your representatives pay attention to messages from their constituents. **3.** Join [TEXPAC](#). TEXPAC is one of the oldest and most effective political action committees in Texas. It serves as the bipartisan political arm of the TMA. **4.** Participate in person – First Tuesdays is your chance to tell your story.



First Tuesdays: On February 4th, McLennan County was represented at the Capitol and met with the staff of our representatives and will do so each month during this legislative session. First Tuesdays is the opportunity for you to meet with your elected officials in Austin to discuss important medically related issues as they relate to your practice. It is your chance to flood the Capitol with physicians from across the state to advocate for your patients. McLennan County Medical Society is planning for a larger contingent on April 1st and will provide transportation.

The next session is **Tuesday 04 March 2025 from 7AM to 4PM CST**. Register [here](#). Hotel accommodation at discounted rate is provided if needed. These sessions are open to medical students, physicians, and alliance members.

Welcome Waco Family Medicine Sports Medicine Class 2025-2026



Waco Family Medicine is pleased to welcome the 2025/26 Sports Medicine Fellows.

[Dr. Dahal and Dr. Geurkink](#).



Purnya Dahal, MD

David Geurkink, MD



LACE UP THE OLD SNEAKERS!

Attention Doctors! Your MCMS inaugural "Walk With a Doc" program is starting **April 19th and every 3rd Saturday of the month at Mountain View Park @ 9AM** rain or shine. Thanks to the overwhelming support of our membership, our doctors will walk with and educate our local community for years to come. Details coming soon! Save the date(s)!



- **Tex Med Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX)**
 - 8-10 May 2025

2025 MCMS Board of Directors

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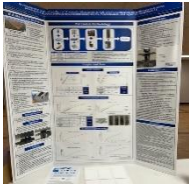
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BAYLOR BU-MMP Baylor University Pre-Medical Practicum Program (BU-MPP) is counting on you to mentor pre-medical and health professions students at Baylor University. Email [MCMS](#) to sign up. The BU-MMP program is also requesting physician speakers to share their personal journey with students the evenings of March 13th or 27th.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Annual Central Texas Science and Engineering Fair (CTSEF).

Special thanks to our physician judges Dr. Hanumantha Ancha, Dr. Barbara Hair, Dr. Seth Koster, and Dr. Rick Schultz who awarded 2 student winners. Winners qualified to advance to state level competitions. CTSEF is governed by a board of volunteer trustees who work in close cooperation with administrative representatives of Baylor University, Mayborn Museum, and McLennan Community College. This year's MCMS winners are **Madeleine Mack** and **David Martinez-Morris** (China Spring High School juniors).



*Dr. and Mrs. Timothy Martindale,
Medhini Kapa*

2024 MCMS ENDOWMENT SCHOLARS

150th Anniversary Endowed Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to Pre-med Baylor students or McLennan Community College students enrolled in health-related degree plans who graduated from schools in McLennan County.

2024 MCC Recipients: **Jaelin Rocha & Mallory McNew**

2024 BU Recipient: **David Boozer, a senior Medical Humanities major from Lorena and Medhini Kapa, a senior Neuroscience major from Woodway**

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