# THE ECONOMIC CASE FOR VACCINES

**VACCINES ARE AMONG THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE WAYS TO PREVENT DISEASE.**

## Vaccines have direct and and indirect economic and societal benefits.

- The U.S. spends nearly $27 billion annually to treat four vaccine preventable illnesses in adults over the age of 50 – flu, pertussis, pneumococcal, and shingles. [i]
- For each $1 invested in the U.S. childhood immunization program, there are nearly $3 in direct medical savings and nearly $11 of societal savings. [ii]
- The vaccination of children born between 1994-2023 will save $540 billion in direct costs and $2.7 trillion in societal costs. [ii]

## The Cost of Outbreaks

### 2011: Measles

The economic burden on U.S. public health institutions to respond to 16 measles outbreaks in 2011 was estimated to be between $2.7 million and $5.3 million. [vii]

### 2017: Hepatitis A and Measles

- San Diego County, CA spent nearly $12.5 million to respond to a major Hepatitis A outbreak. [iii]
- Minnesota experienced a measles outbreak that cost state and local health departments $1.3 million. [iv]

### 2018: Flu

The 2017-18 flu season was particularly bad, resulting in 52,000 deaths. Flu costs the U.S. an estimated $3.2 billion in direct medical costs and another $8 billion in indirect costs. [viii]

### 2019: Measles

Measles outbreaks resulted in over 1,000 cases. One outbreak in Washington State required a $2.3 million public health response, while New York City spent $8.4 million to respond to its measles outbreak. [v, vi]

**IN 2025 OUTBREAKS OF MEASLES, PERTUSSIS, AND A HARSH FLU SEASON HAVE CONTINUED TO TAX STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES.**

## ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, KINDERGARTEN VACCINATION COVERAGE RATES ARE DECREASING. [IX]

### The Future Costs of Declining Vaccine Coverage Rates.

- A systematic review [x] of measles outbreaks in 18 states from 2000-2025 estimates that:
  - The average cost per case of measles was $43,000, ranging from $7,000 to over $243,000.
    - The large range depended on the number of contacts, the location of the outbreak, and the number of cases per outbreak.
  - An outbreak of 50 cases of measles is estimated to cost $1.05 million.
    - As of October 2025, five states have already had outbreaks of more than 50 measles cases in 2025 alone. [xi]
- The NIH estimates that a 5% decline in measles vaccine coverage would lead to an estimated threefold increase in measles cases among children aged 2 to 11 years old and an additional $2.1 million in costs per year. [xii]
- The IMF estimates that the expected yearly cost of pandemic influenza is approximately $500 billion (0.6 percent of global income), including both lost income and the intrinsic cost of elevated mortality. [ix]

### Vaccination Across the Lifespan Is Cost Effective and Has Widespread Economic Benefits.

## IN 2025, THE U.S. HAS HAD THE MOST MEASLES CASES IN THREE DECADES AND THE MOST DEADLY FLU SEASON (2024-25) FOR CHILDREN IN A NON-PANDEMIC YEAR [X, XI]


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