Update: Measles still on the rise in Kentucky

By Melissa Patrick
KY Health News

As of Sept. 14, Kentucky has confirmed 42 cases of measles in its current outbreak, up from 35 cases a week ago, according to the state's measles dashboard.

The dashboard is updated daily by 10 a.m. Monday through Friday, except on state holidays.

Those cases are in Barren (5 cases); Caldwell (2); Christian (19); Owen (2); Todd (1); Trigg (8); and Washington (5) counties. Four people have been hospitalized.

All of the cases, including four in Jessamine County earlier this year, are in individuals who are either unvaccinated or whose vaccination status is unknown, according to the dashboard.

Further, there is still an advisory for people who might have been exposed to measles in Richmond and Olive Hill after an unvaccinated, out-of-state traveler visited multiple businesses on Aug. 24, Aug. 27 and Aug. 28. If exposed, it is important to monitor yourself for symptoms for 21 days after the exposure, which goes through Sept. 18 for some. Click here to see the measles exposure locations.

Health officials continue to encourage people to make sure they are up to date on their measles vaccinations. Two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles if exposed to the virus, and one dose is 93% effective at preventing measles, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The measles vaccination series is typically given to children at 12 to 15 months and then at 4 to 6 years old, but people of any age can get the vaccine.

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can cause serious health complications, especially in young children. Measles is spread through the air, where it can remain suspended for up to two hours. One infected person can infect nine in 10 unprotected people around them.

Early symptoms of measles begin seven to 14 days after exposure and include high fever, cough, runny nose, and red/watery eyes. The characteristic measles rash can appear three to five days after symptoms begin, usually on the face before spreading down to the rest of the body.

Anyone who is concerned about being exposed to measles is asked to call their provider or local health department to seek guidance on how to proceed. Anyone who has measles should talk to their healthcare provider from home and stay away from other people until their symptoms are resolved.

Headphones too loud?

How everyday listening habits affect hearing

By Trey Cline
University of Kentucky

From podcasts to playlists, earbuds and headphones have become part of many individuals' daily routines. But everyday listening habits can put hearing at risk — and small, daily changes can help protect it.

Why volume matters

As sound travels into the ear, there are thousands of sensory cells in your inner ear, known as hair cells, that convert the sound vibrations into electrical signals that your brain can understand.

Listening to sounds at loud volumes, including through headphones, for prolonged periods of time can permanently damage the delicate hair cells. This damage occurs due to excessive mechanical force on the hair cells, toxicity related to overexcitement of the cells and inflammation.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, as many as 6% to 24% of adults under the age of 70 years and 17% of teenagers ages 12 to 19 have evidence of noise-induced hearing loss.

How loud is too loud?

Noise is considered hazardous based on how loud it is, which is measured in decibels (dBA), the duration of noise exposure and how frequently you're exposed. It is recommended to take precautions at 85 dBA.

There are a few simple ways to tell when sound may be too loud:

If you cannot hear someone talking at a normal voice level nearby.

You must raise your voice or shout to talk to someone a few feet away.

Sounds seem muffled after you leave the noisy area.

After leaving a noisy area, your ears ring (tinnitus), feel full or hurt.

How to protect your hearing

If you know you tend to listen at a high volume, or if you often spend time in noisy environments, it's not too late to protect your hearing. A few practical steps can help reduce your risk of permanent hearing loss.

Follow the 60/60 rule. Keep your listening device volume at no more than 60% for 60 minutes at a time before taking a break.

Pay attention to volume warnings. Many smartphones can monitor sound levels and alert you when listening habits may put your hearing at risk.

Choose noise-canceling headphones. Blocking out background noise will allow you to listen to your device at a lower volume.

When participating in loud activities such as concerts, shooting, using power tools or lawn equipment, use well-fitting earplugs or other hearing protection. In extremely loud environments, multiple types of hearing protection may be warranted, such as earmuffs over earplugs.

When to get your hearing checked

If you use headphones or are exposed to high levels of noise each day, consider regular hearing checkups. You should also check with your healthcare provider if you notice any warning signs, including:

Difficulty understanding speech in quiet or noisy environments such as restaurants, meetings or family gatherings

Frequently asking for repetition when communicating with others

Muffled sounds and a feeling that your ear is plugged

Tinnitus (ringing, roaring, hissing or buzzing in the ears)

Listening to the TV or radio at a higher volume than normal

This week's column is by Trey Cline, Au.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at the UK College of Medicine.

Scams

From page 1A

Matt Wright, CEO of Synima, believes the single most useful skill right now is learning to identify an AI voice in the middle of a call.

He says that this kind of scam technology has advanced at unprecedented speeds, and criminals now need only a handful of seconds of someone's voice to build a clone convincing enough to pass as their bank or the IRS, often without the target knowing anything is off.

A random call about your finances is reason enough to be wary. Fraudsters typically open with a claim about suspicious activity on your account or a refund you're owed, methods designed purely to extract personal information. What's changed, Wright notes, is accessibility: voice-cloning software is now cheap enough that criminal groups who previously couldn't afford this kind of technology are using it freely, putting far more people at risk.

There are three signs that can expose an AI scam call, if you're listening for them:

--Odd delays before the caller responds to a question

--Background sound that cuts in or out without explanation

--Difficulty giving a natural answer to something unscripted or unexpected

Wright's advice is simple: If a call about your money or personal information feels off in any way, trust what your gut says and end the call right away.

To illustrate the financial toll, Americans lost $12.5 billion to scams in 2024 alone, with phone scams averaging roughly $1,500 per victim.

Debt

From page 1A

Joining the Governor for the announcement was Melissa Henry, a Kentuckian whose severe, chronic back pain led to multiple surgeries and appointments that loaded up thousands of dollars in medical debt. Henry shared how having a portion of that debt erased helped her move forward and find hope.

"No one chooses to get sick, and there is no shopping around to compare prices. Like thousands of other Kentuckians, I was opted into medical debt by illness and accident. Trying to focus on getting better, I had to choose between keeping the lights on and food in the fridge or trying to pay down the debt. It was a painful distraction keeping me from focusing on recovery. That debt followed me and affected my credit for years. It made it harder to buy a car, qualify for a mortgage; every loan I got had a higher interest rate. I delayed going back to the doctor even when I should have," Henry said. "Undue Medical Debt erasing my debt gave me hope. Hope that there are people and companies that care more about human lives than money. Hope that someday no one will have to make an impossible choice because they can't afford medical care."

To qualify for the program, one must be a resident of Kentucky who owes at least 5% of their annual income for outstanding medical bills or earns at or below 400% of the federal poverty level, which is around $100,000 for a family of three.

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE LEVYING AND COLLECTION OF AN AD VALOREM TAX FOR THE CITY OF GREENSBURG, KENTUCKY FOR THE YEAR OF 2026
ORDINANCE NO. 2026-0915

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENSBURG, KENTUCKY:

Section I: The ad valorem tax of (.211) on each assessed value of property is hereby levied on all lands, improvements and personal property, tangible and intangible, held or owned by any person, firm, company, corporation or association in his, hers, theirs, or its name, or as fiduciary or agent and subject to taxation under the laws of the State of Kentucky, including all property and franchises heretofore and hereinafter assessed by the Green County Property Valuation Administrator, State Tax commission and the State Board of Valuation and Assessment. A franchise tax at the rate of ($.25) per $100.00 on all bank deposits as defined in KRS Chapter 136 shall be assessed. As allowable by statues, the ad valorem tax on motor vehicles shall be the same at which was levied January 1, 1983, ($.270) per $100.00 of assessed value, this is to be paid through the office of the appropriate County Clerk at the time of the vehicle registration and distributed to the City of Greensburg.

Section II: All of such taxes above, with the exception of motor vehicle taxes, shall be paid to the City Clerk/Treasurer and shall be due and collectible on receipt. All taxes paid on or before October 31st, 2026, are entitled to a 2% discount; all tax bills paid between November 1 and December 31st, 2026 are due as billed; all tax bills not paid by January 1, 2027 shall be deemed delinquent and in addition to the amount of taxes due, a penalty of 5% shall be paid; delinquent tax bills paid after February 1, 2027 shall have a 10% penalty added; after March 1, 2027 interest will accrue at 1% per month 12% annual. All penalties shall be collected in the same manner as the taxes due.

Section III: The City Clerk/Treasurer is hereby authorized to collect said taxes and penalties and to allow proper discount.

Section IV: This ad valorem tax is levied for the purpose of paying officers and employees of the City of Greensburg, expenses to the fire and police departments, utilities, street and city property maintenance and improvements, construction, as well as the other current expense of the city; and shall be paid into the General Fund for the purpose of paying all legal claims against the City.

Section V: The Green County assessment of property situated within the City of Greensburg is hereby adopted as the city assessment for the City ad valorem taxes for the year 2026.

Section VI: Any unpaid tax as herein provided for shall remain a lien against the property in favor of the City of Greensburg until paid.

The City of Greensburg proposes a tax rate of .211 with anticipated revenue of $263,916.

Section VII: This Proposed Ordinance becomes effective upon adoption and publication according to law.

Enacted this 15th day of September, 2026.

A COMPLETE COPY OF THE 2026 PROPERTY TAX ORDINANCE No. 2026-0915 IS AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION.

John M Shuffett
John M Shuffett, Mayor

ATTEST:
Kimberly Darnell
Kimberly Darnell, City Clerk/Treasurer

First Reading: August 26, 2026
Second Reading: September 15, 2026
Publication Date: September 24, 2026