

Poll: Belief in false measles claims correlated with lower vaccination rates

Wire report

Americans are increasingly unsure what to believe about measles as an outbreak spreads throughout the country, according to a survey by the nonpartisan health research organization KFF.

The poll shows that nearly a quarter of those asked believe a commonly repeated false claim that getting a child vaccinated against measles could lead to autism. About the same percentage of those surveyed believe it's either definitely or probably true that vitamin A can prevent someone from contracting measles, even though it cannot.

And 19% of those surveyed believed untrue statements that the vaccine for measles is more dangerous than contracting the virus.

Parents who believed at least one of the three incorrect claims were more likely to have delayed or skipped some vaccinations for their children. Nearly

a quarter, 24%, of those surveyed said they haven't protected their children via vaccination, more than double the 11% of parents who responded that all three of the false statements about measles were definitely or probably untrue.

Ongoing outbreak

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that as of late last week there are more than 800 measles diagnoses throughout at least 25 states.

The infections are spread throughout different age groups with 31% of cases in children under five years old, 38% of diagnoses in those between five and 19 years old, 29% in people above the age of 20 and 2% in those with an unknown age, according to the CDC.

Eighty-five patients have been hospitalized and three have died. Nearly all of the confirmed cases, 96%, are in people who have not received the MMR vaccine or who are unsure about their vaccination status, according to the CDC.

States with confirmed cases include Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont and Washington.

Virginia reported its first case this year over the weekend, though that's not yet included on the CDC's website about the ongoing outbreak.

Ongoing concern

KFF's survey shows that even though there are many people who believe untrue claims about measles or the MMR vaccine — which protects against measles, mumps and rubella — there are higher percentages of people who understand basic facts about the virus and who are concerned about the ongoing outbreak.

Seventy-five percent of those polled said it was incorrect that the MMR

vaccine leads to autism, 81% responded it was wrong to say the vaccine is more dangerous than contracting the virus and 75% said it was false that vitamin A can prevent someone from getting measles.

About half, or 51%, of those surveyed said they are at least somewhat concerned about the spread of measles. That worry was highest among Hispanic adults, 62%, and Black adults, 61%.

Most of the people surveyed, 56%, knew that the spread of measles was higher this year than during prior years, though that number varied among people of different political leanings.

Seventy-one percent of Democrats knew that diagnoses of measles have spiked in recent months, compared with 54% of independents and 49% of Republicans.

KFF conducted the survey of 1,380 adults between April 8 and April 15 via telephone and online questions.

Suggestions for preventing your dog from digging

I am writing a series of articles dealing with management of troublesome dog behaviors.

The focus of this article is how to manage dogs who want to dig in the yard.

With spring here and the ground getting easy to dig, I hope this article gives you some ideas that will work for you.

First and foremost, you really can't let the dog be outside unsupervised. If you aren't there to stop the digging, he or she will



Rhonda York

dig at will and have a lot of fun.

Next, you need to understand the reason why your dog is digging. For instance, my dog, Blake,

digs if there are moles or voles underground. Unless those critters are gone, he will keep trying to find them. So, management for that can be to let the dog dig in order to catch whatever the dog is after. The other is to get the critters removed by other means. Be careful using any kind of poison as you don't want your pets getting into it.

Another reason that dogs dig is because they enjoy it as they are natural diggers. As a form of

management, you could make a part of your yard as the "digging zone." You would need to train the dog to only dig there and not in other places in your yard.

Digging could also be an issue if a dog is bored. Management would entail making sure the dog is tired before putting him in the yard since then he'll be less likely to dig.

A dog may also be hot and trying to dig down to cooler earth. Have a plastic swimming pool

available to allow the dog to cool off that way.

Two other reasons a dog may be digging could be due to wanting to escape and anxiety. For escape artists, you will need to fortify the bottom of fences with no-dig fence barriers or other products. If the digging is due to anxiety, management is not the issue. The anxiety needs to be dealt with by getting help from a trainer and your veterinarian.

Here are some general

ideas. Fill the hole with lava rocks and cover with an inch of dirt. Fill the hole with black pepper and some dirt. Put chicken wire down and cover with dirt. Use repellent sprays. Use fencing or netting around trees or gardens to keep the dog away from certain areas.

Dealing with dogs who dig can be difficult. As with many problem behaviors, supervision is key.

Rhonda York is a certified dog trainer.

HEROES ROUND UP



In honor of May's Military Appreciation Month, Armed Forces Bank is launching Heroes Round Up, a new program that empowers anyone – military or civilian – to transform their everyday debit card purchases into support for veterans experiencing homelessness. Launching May 1, Heroes Round Up makes it easy to round up purchases to the nearest dollar in \$1 or \$5 increments, with Armed Forces Bank automatically donating the spare change to Veterans Community Project (VCP) – a nonprofit on the front lines of ending veteran homelessness nationwide through innovative housing and support services. On Monday, Armed Forces Bank associates from Fort Leavenworth and the greater Kansas City area will volunteer at the Kansas City Veterans Community Project. Armed Forces Bank volunteers will help veterans move in and out of homes, as well as stock shelves in the onsite Outreach Center for veterans. Other volunteer activities may include painting homes, landscaping, building tiny homes, preparing care packages and leading financial literacy workshops. *Submitted*

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