

# Unvaccinated boy almost dies of tetanus

By GILLIAN FLACCUS  
Associated Press

PORTLAND — An unvaccinated 6-year-old Oregon boy was hospitalized for two months for tetanus and almost died of the bacterial illness after getting a deep laceration on his forehead while playing on a farm, according to a case study published Friday by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The 2017 case is the first case of pediatric tetanus in Oregon in more than 30 years and alarmed infectious disease experts who said tetanus is almost unheard of in the U.S. since widespread immunization began in the 1940s.

The child received an emergency dose of the tetanus vaccine in the hospital but his parents declined to give him a second dose — or any other childhood shots — after he recovered, the paper said.

“When I read that, my jaw dropped. I could not believe it. That’s a tragedy and a misunderstanding and I’m just flabbergasted,” said Dr. William Schaffner, an expert in infectious diseases and chair at the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, Tennessee.

“This is an awful disease, but ... we have had a mechanism to completely prevent it and the reason that we have virtually no cases anymore in the United States is because we vaccinate, literally, everyone.”

The paper did not provide any details about the child, his family or where they live in Oregon and attempts to get that information from the paper’s authors

were unsuccessful.

News about the tetanus case comes as lawmakers in Oregon and Washington are considering bills that would end non-medical exemptions for routine childhood vaccines as the Pacific Northwest weathers its third month of a measles outbreak. Seventy people in southwest Washington, most of them unvaccinated children, have been diagnosed with the highly contagious viral illness since Jan. 1, as well as a handful of people in Portland, Oregon.

Unlike measles, which is a virus, someone who has survived a case of tetanus is not immune and can get the illness again if they remain unvaccinated. Tetanus also isn’t transmitted person-to-person by sneezing or coughing like the measles, but instead comes from bacterial spores that are found in the environment.

Tetanus spores exist everywhere, particularly in the soil. When an unvaccinated person gets a deep, penetrating wound, those spores can invade the cut and begin producing the bacteria that causes the illness.

The tetanus bacterium secretes a toxin that gets into the bloodstream and latches onto the nervous system.

Anywhere from three to 21 days after infection, symptoms appear: muscle spasms, lockjaw, difficulty swallowing and breathing and seizures. The disease can cause death or severe disability in those who survive, Schaffner said.

About 30 people contract tetanus each year nationwide, according to the CDC, and 16 people died of it between 2009 and 2015. It’s rare among children; those over 65 are the most vulnerable.



AP Photo/Sarah Zimmerman  
**Hundreds of people, including families, attend a rally at the Oregon Capitol protesting a proposal to tighten school vaccine requirements Thursday in Salem.**

## Parents protest vaccine bill as measles outbreak grows

By SARAH ZIMMERMAN  
Associated Press

SALEM — As a measles outbreak in southwest Washington continues to grow, hundreds of people, including families, swarmed the Oregon Capitol to protest a measure making it harder for parents to opt out of school vaccination requirements.

“There is no measles emergency,” said Sarah Bacon during a speech at a protest rally. Bacon is the executive director of Oregonians for Medical Freedom, a grassroots organization that advocates for parents’ freedom to make medical decisions for their children.

More than 70 people, many of them unvaccinated children, have been sickened with measles in Clark County, Washington. In Oregon, six people have been confirmed with measles, a disease the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considered to be eliminated in 2000.

Doctors and health officials have said that vaccines have been proven safe and effective, and noted that serious vaccine side effects are rare. In a video message last month, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams pleaded with parents to “protect their children by getting them vaccinated,” saying it is the best protection against measles.

The recent outbreak, which has been linked to at least four of the measles cases in Oregon, has fueled lawmakers to tighten the state’s relaxed vaccine exemption policy. That policy allows parents to decline required immunizations for religious, personal or philosophical reasons. The state’s considering a proposal that would require children to receive vaccinations in order to attend school, unless they have a doctor’s note seeking an exemption for medical reasons.

If passed, Oregon would join only three other states in banning nonmedical exemptions for vac-

cines. Washington state is also considering a similar proposal.

But parents call the measure discriminatory, saying the state shouldn’t hold a child’s education hostage in exchange for receiving vaccines.

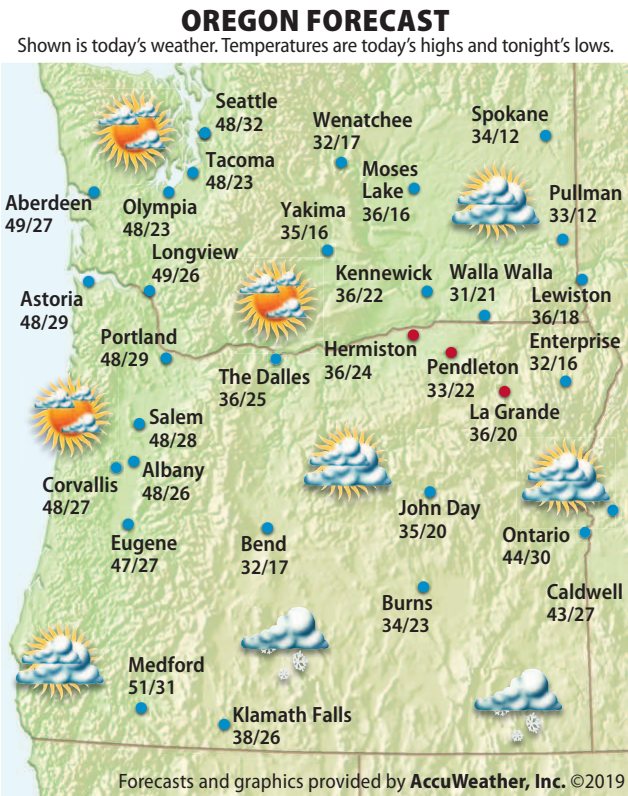
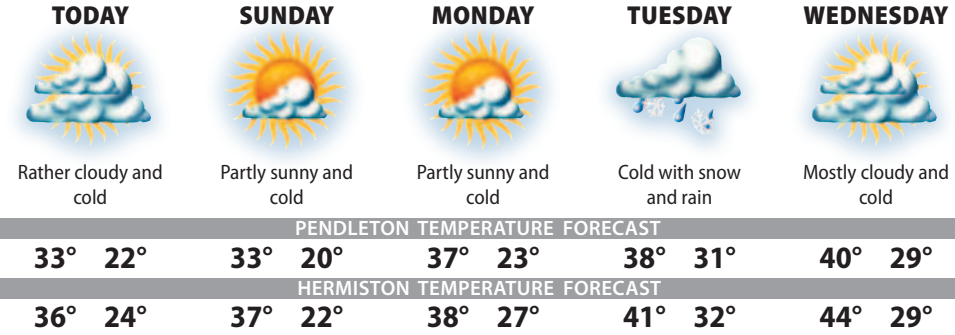
Emily Noel is a mother from Albany who said she used to be pro-vaccination but changed her mind after the birth of her son. She said that after talking to her pediatrician and reading scientific studies, she decided that the risks of some vaccines outweigh the benefits.

Her 1-year-old son is partially vaccinated, and under the Oregon bill she would be forced to decide whether to fully vaccinate her son, homeschool him, or leave the state.

While the vaccine debate has sparked pitched debate, Noel stresses that both sides should focus on “what we have in common.”

“What we agree on is that community health is important, children’s health is important,” she said.

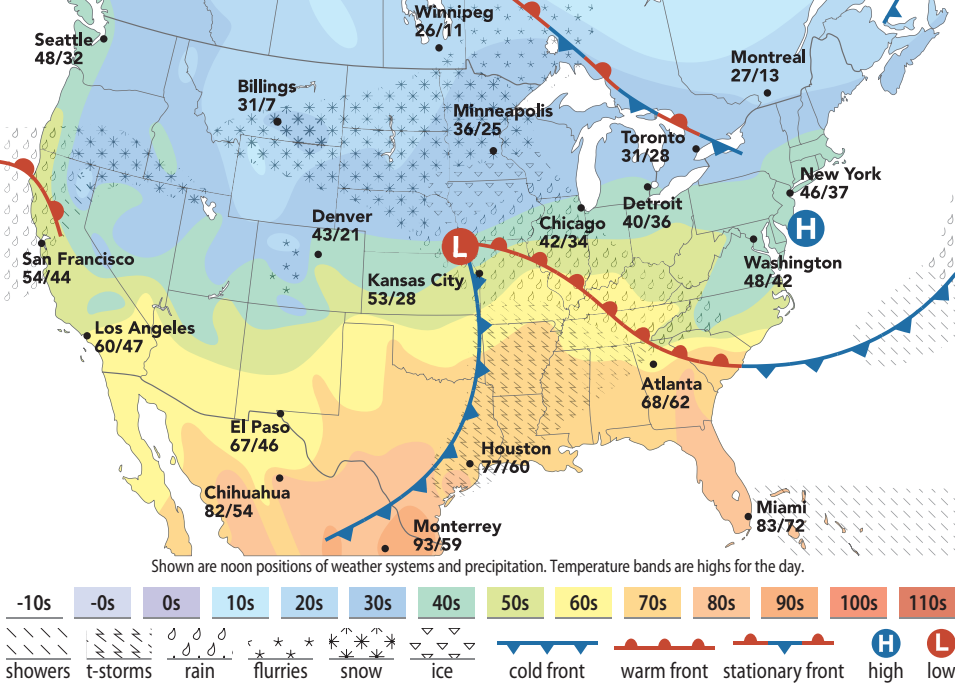
### Forecast for Pendleton Area



| ALMANAC                        |            |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|
| PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest. |            |            |
| TEMP.                          | HIGH       | LOW        |
| Yesterday                      | 38°        | 25°        |
| Normals                        | 53°        | 34°        |
| Records                        | 73° (2004) | 18° (1897) |
| PRECIPITATION                  |            |            |
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m.         | Trace      |            |
| Month to date                  | 0.31"      |            |
| Normal month to date           | 0.29"      |            |
| Year to date                   | 5.16"      |            |
| Last year to date              | 2.85"      |            |
| Normal year to date            | 2.80"      |            |
| HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest. |            |            |
| TEMP.                          | HIGH       | LOW        |
| Yesterday                      | 38°        | 18°        |
| Normals                        | 55°        | 32°        |
| Records                        | 72° (2005) | 15° (1931) |
| PRECIPITATION                  |            |            |
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m.         | 0.00"      |            |
| Month to date                  | 0.04"      |            |
| Normal month to date           | 0.26"      |            |
| Year to date                   | 3.43"      |            |
| Last year to date              | 1.75"      |            |
| Normal year to date            | 2.50"      |            |
| WINDS (in mph)                 |            |            |
|                                | Today      | Sun.       |
| Boardman                       | NE 4-8     | N 4-8      |
| Pendleton                      | N 4-8      | N 4-8      |
| SUN AND MOON                   |            |            |
| Sunrise today                  | 6:20 a.m.  |            |
| Sunset tonight                 | 5:52 p.m.  |            |
| Moonrise today                 | 8:01 a.m.  |            |
| Moonset today                  | 9:06 p.m.  |            |

**NATIONAL EXTREMES**  
Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 90° in Carrizo Springs, Texas **Low** -22° in Grayling, Mich.

### NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



### BRIEFLY

#### 23 sheep killed in likely wolf attack

SALEM (AP) — Wildlife officials say 23 sheep were killed in a probable wolf attack in southwestern Oregon.

A USDA Wildlife Services specialist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture found the dead sheep on a private pasture in Curry County. Some of the animals were found partially consumed.

An investigation found the attack was “consistent with a wolf attack,” though there wasn’t enough evidence to differentiate between a wolf and a domestic dog.

The attack comes as federal wildlife officials plan to lift protections for gray wolves. States would manage the animals, which are despised by farmers and ranchers. Oregon, California and Washington have so far banned hunting them.

Wolf population has been on the rise since receiving endangered species protections in 1975 when there were only 1,000 left.

#### Oregon and PAC settle voting violation

SALEM (AP) — Oregon’s elections director and a political action committee that disenfranchised nearly 100 voters by turning their ballots in late in the November 2018 election have come to an agreement in which most of its \$94,750 fine is suspended and the PAC will detail its procedures in acting as a go-between.

The incident exposed a potential election vulnerability in Oregon, the first state to adopt an all-mail vote. No one knows how many groups in Oregon collect filled-in bal-

lots to turn in because state government officials in charge of elections have not tracked those activities.

But in the agreement signed on Monday and provided to The Associated Press, the directors of Defend Oregon committed to describing whether people delivering ballots for voters are volunteers, employees or paid canvassers, the training they receive, a description of signs they use, and of the process used to gather and deliver ballots.

#### Substitute teacher barred from district after racial remark

SALEM (AP) — A substitute teacher in Salem has been barred from teaching in a district after a student says the teacher said “go back to Mexico” when the student said he didn’t want to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

KOIN reports the incident happened Tuesday at Sweigle Elementary School in the Salem-Keizer School District, where the unnamed substitute teacher has worked for two years.

A spokesperson for the district said a student wasn’t participating in the Pledge of Allegiance and, after the teacher made a racial comment, the student reported what happened.

Lillian Govus, director of communications for Salem-Keizer, said: “It’s hard to stand up to an adult and say that an adult is wrong. But, in this case, he did the absolute right thing.”

The substitute teacher will no longer be allowed to teach in the district.

**CORRECTIONS:** The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211  
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211  
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed major holidays

EastOregonian.com

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255  
or go online to EastOregonian.com  
and click on 'Subscribe'

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday,  
Monday and postal holidays, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers  
Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR.  
Postmaster: send address changes to  
East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801.  
Copyright © 2019, EO Media Group

Subscriber services:

For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops  
or delivery concerns call 1-800-522-0255 ext. 1

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

|          | Local home delivery | Savings (cover price) |
|----------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| EZPay    | \$14.50             | 41 percent            |
| 52 weeks | \$173.67            | 41 percent            |
| 26 weeks | \$91.86             | 38 percent            |
| 13 weeks | \$47.77             | 36 percent            |

\*EZ Pay = one-year rate with a monthly credit  
or debit card/check charge

Single copy price:  
\$1.50 Tuesday through Saturday

Circulation Manager:  
Bonny Tuller, 541-966-0828

ADVERTISING

Regional Publisher and Revenue Director:

• Christopher Rush  
541-278-2669 • crush@eomediagroup.com

Advertising Services:

• Angela Treadwell  
541-966-0827 • atreadwell@eastoregonian.com

• Grace Bubar  
541-276-2214 • gbubar@eastoregonian.com

Multimedia Consultants:

• Kimberly Macias  
541-278-2683 • kmacias@eastoregonian.com

• Jeanne Jewett  
541-564-4531 • jjewett@eastoregonian.com

• Dayle Stinson  
541-278-2670 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

• Audra Workman  
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

Classified & Legal Advertising

1-800-962-2819 or 541-278-2678  
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legal@eastoregonian.com

NEWS

• To submit news tips and press releases:  
call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com

• To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News:  
email community@eastoregonian.com or call Tammy Malgesini  
at 541-564-4539 or Renee Struthers at 541-966-0818.

• To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries:  
email rstuthers@eastoregonian.com or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements

• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips:  
541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

Business Office Manager:  
541-966-0822

COMMERCIAL PRINTING  
Production Manager: Mike Jensen  
541-215-0824 • mjensen@eastoregonian.com