

Measles (Rubeola)

What is measles?

Measles is a highly contagious virus that is in the nose and throat mucus of an infected person. Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. Complications with measles can include ear infections and diarrhea. Some people with measles can suffer from pneumonia (infection of the lungs) and swelling of the brain.

How measles spread?

Measles can spread to others through coughing and sneezing. The measles virus can live up to two hours in the air where an infected person coughed or sneezed. You can get measles from breathing in the contaminated air. You can also get measles from touching an infected surface, then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of people in contact with that person, who is not immune will also become infected.

What are the signs of measles?

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Tiny white spots (Koplik spots)
- Rash



****If you think you have measles call your doctor and let them know your symptoms so they can tell you what to do next. Your doctor may need to make special arrangements to see you, so other people are not at risk of getting infected.****

How to prevent measles?

You can prevent measles with the MMR vaccine. The vaccine protects against three diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella. The CDC recommends that children, teens, and adults who work in healthcare should have two doses of MMR vaccine. Adults who do not work in healthcare should have at least one dose of MMR vaccine unless proven immune. Children can get their first dose at 12 months to 15 months, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.