

ALL ABOUT MEASLES

for Parents, Families, and the Community

MEASLES SYMPTOMS

Measles disease starts with a high fever followed by the “3 C’s” that include cough, runny nose (coryza), and/or red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis). A red, blotchy rash begins 2-4 days after onset. The rash begins at the hairline and spreads down to the face, body, and then to the hands and feet over the next 3 days. The rash then fades in the same order it appeared. The rash lasts 5-6 days.

Up to a third of measles cases become severe and may progress to pneumonia, seizures, encephalitis, brain damage, and death.



HOW IS MEASLES SPREAD?

Measles is very contagious and can be spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can live in the air and on surfaces for at least two hours. A person with measles is infectious four days before the start of the rash until 4 days after the rash begins.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE MEASLES

If you think you may have measles, **CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER FIRST** for instructions on what to do. Calling ahead will avoid exposing others. It is very important to stay home and away from others when sick.

MEASLES TREATMENT

There is no specific treatment for measles. Measures can be taken to possibly prevent measles in persons who have been exposed.

MEASLES PREVENTION:

The best way to prevent measles is through two doses of MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine given according to the recommended schedule:

- First dose of MMR—given on or after the first birthday
- Second dose of MMR—recommended to be given at age 4-6 years, may be given as soon as 1 month after the first dose.

Since MMR vaccine is not routinely given to children less than one year of age, it is especially important for family members of young children to make sure that everyone in their household is up to date on their vaccinations to protect the family from illness. Please contact your health care provider or your local health department for further information about MMR vaccine.

**If you have any questions, please contact us at
(503) 630-8550**