



Measles (Rubeola)

What is Measles?

Measles is an acute, highly contagious respiratory disease, caused by a virus. Persons who have not had the measles and have not received the measles vaccine are at risk.

How is Measles spread?

Measles is spread through the air by an infected person breathing, coughing or sneezing. Respiratory droplets can get into people's noses or throats when they breathe or by putting their fingers in their mouth after touching an infected surface.

How is Measles treated?

- Treatment of measles is symptomatic
- See a physician for treatment of measles symptoms
- Relieve itching
- Control fever
- Maintain rest
- Protect eyes from strong or direct light
- Encourage fluid intake

How can Measles be prevented?

- Measles is a vaccine preventable disease.
- In Michigan, all children entering school must have two doses of MMR vaccine given at the recommended intervals.
- A child diagnosed with measles should be excluded from school for at least four days after the appearance of the rash.

Symptoms of Measles:

Symptoms of measles generally begin about 7-14 days after a person is infected, and include:

- Fever
- Blotchy rash
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Feeling run down, achy
- Tiny white spots with bluish-white centers found inside the mouth

A typical case of measles begins with mild to moderate fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, and sore throat. Two or three days after symptoms begin, tiny white spots (Koplik's spots) may appear inside the mouth.

Three to five days after the start of symptoms, a red or reddish-brown rash appears. The rash usually begins on a person's face at the hairline and spreads downward to the neck, trunk, arms, legs, and feet. When the rash appears, a person's fever may spike to more than 104 degrees Fahrenheit. After a few days, the fever subsides and the rash fades.

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CDC Public Information

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