



(Revised April 2025)

Measles Fact Sheet

How it is spread

Measles spreads very easily and quickly through the air when a sick person breathes, coughs, sneezes or talks. Measles can stay in the air around you for up to 2 hours.

Symptoms

Symptoms usually start 7 to 21 (usually about 10 days) days after being around another sick person. They include:

- Fever
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Feeling tired or irritable
- Red, water eyes
- Small white spots inside the mouth and throat

Later in the illness, a rash that starts on the head/face and spreads down over the body (colour varies depending on skin tone). The rash lasts 5-6 day.

Possible complications

Measles can get worse with complications such as ear infections, lung infections or brain infections.

Stopping the spread of measles

- Measles can be prevented by the MMR (Measles Mumps Rubella) vaccine. It is very important for all people who are eligible to get vaccinated.
- While in hospital, if you have suspected or proven measles, you will be placed in a private room and staff caring for you will be wearing gowns, gloves, masks and glasses.
- You must stay in your room so you don't spread measles to other people.
- If care is needed outside of your room, you will be asked to wear a mask.

What to do if you're exposed to measles

- If you were born before 1970, have had measles before, or got two measles vaccines, you are likely protected from getting measles.
- If you're not protected and were around someone with measles call your doctor, or your [local public health unit](#) right away.
- Your provider, or a provider from Public Health, will decide if you can get a dose of the MMR vaccine or an injection of measles antibodies to help protect you from getting measles after being around a sick person with measles.