



What You Should Know About Measles During an Outbreak*

You might be hearing more about measles. Which isn't great...

This is because measles is spreading again. You may be wondering how to protect yourself and your family during this time. So, we put together what leading health experts think you should know about measles.

Measles is very contagious.

Measles is a virus that spreads VERY easily. It spreads through:

- The air when someone with measles sneezes or coughs and a person breathes in the infected droplets.
- A person makes contact with fluids from the nose or mouth of a person with measles.

Measles can live in the air and on surfaces for up to **two hours** after someone with measles has coughed, sneezed, or touched something. This means **anyone** in a place where someone with measles was could come into contact with the virus (this is also called being exposed to measles).

What are the signs and symptoms of measles?

Measles can lead to a high fever with a red or brownish blotchy rash (and other symptoms). Before the rash appears, someone may have:

- a cough,
- a runny nose,
- red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis).

Symptoms are usually the worst during the first 1 to 3 days of being sick. The rash usually comes 3 to 5 days after symptoms start.

You have the power to protect against measles.

The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine and the measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (MMRV) vaccine are **safe!** And **they work** to protect people. Measles can cause brain swelling and death - so a lot of people who have it have to be hospitalized. **Use the tools we have to protect yourself and your loved ones.**

When do children need to get the measles vaccine?

Children should get two doses for the best protection:

- One at 12 through 15 months of age
- The second at 4 through 6 years of age

If you are traveling overseas, a child can get a vaccine before leaving:

- One at 6 through 11 months of age
- A child 12 months of age or older will need two doses (at least 28 days apart)

If you are not sure if you or a loved one is vaccinated.

Talk to your/your loved one's doctor right away. They can help you find out if someone needs to be vaccinated. Know that:

- It is okay to get a measles vaccine if you have had one before.
- People with immune problems or who are taking medications that suppress the immune system might not be able to get vaccinated.

Your/your loved one's doctor is the best person to ask and figure out next steps with.

If you are contacted about being exposed to measles, don't wait to call your doctor or follow the all the instructions you are given.