

Measles



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



What you need to know

Measles is a highly contagious and serious disease that is caused by a virus. It is passed through direct contact with nose or throat secretions and through the air when an ill person coughs or sneezes. Severe illness is most common in young children and adults over the age of 20. It is especially dangerous (and sometimes deadly) to young children and infants. Serious complications from measles include blindness, encephalitis (infection that causes brain swelling), pneumonia, ear infections, severe diarrhea and dehydration.

Symptoms

Symptoms begin about 7 to 14 days after exposure.

- High fever for 4-7 days
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Red, watery eyes
- White spots inside cheeks
- Rash that lasts 5-6 days, usually on face and neck and spreads downward to the trunk and outward to the hands and feet

See your health care provider for treatment and for symptoms that are severe or do not get better.

How to prevent getting and spreading it

The best way to protect against measles is to get the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. Doctors recommend that all children get the MMR shot.

Measles is very contagious. The virus can stay in the air long after a sick person leaves a room.

- Get yourself and your child(ren) vaccinated.
- If you suspect your child has measles, please call your health care provider first to make arrangements to be seen to avoid spreading virus to others.
- Measles can be spread four days prior to rash onset to four days after rash erupts.
- If your child has measles, he or she must stay home until no longer contagious.

To learn more about this and other communicable diseases, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

Do you need to find a health care provider near you? Please call the Washington County Health Care Resource Line at **503-846-8851**.

This factsheet was adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website in collaboration with Beaverton School District.