



Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

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www.cmdhd.org

Measles

What is Measles?

Measles is an infectious disease caused by a virus. This virus is spread from one person to another by droplets from the nose, throat and mouth through sneezing, coughing, and speaking. This illness is more common in late winter and early spring. There has been a 95% decline in this disease since the vaccine was developed.

What are the first symptoms of Measles?

Before the rash appears, people may experience: 1) a hard dry cough, 2) tiny white spots on the inner cheeks, gums, palate surrounded by redness, 3) red, watery eyes, 4) high fever, and 5) runny nose. A rash appears first on the face between the 3rd and 7th day, spreads across the body and lasts 4 – 7 days.

How long is the person contagious?

A person can spread Measles up to **4 days before** the rash appears and for **4 days after** the rash appears.

What is the treatment?

Keep comfortable, quiet and at home until 4 days after the appearance of the rash.

Can Measles be serious?

Otitis media (ear infection) or pneumonia could occur as a result of Measles. Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) is an uncommon, but serious complication of Measles.

Who needs immunizations?

Current recommendations:

- 2 doses of MMR
- Children should receive their 1st dose between 12 and 15 months of age and their second dose between 4 and 6 years of age.
- Adults born in 1957 or later should have at least one dose of MMR.
- Other groups of people at high risk of exposure to measles include: college students, international travelers and health care personnel.

Pregnant women should not get the live vaccine and all women of childbearing age should be cautious to keep out of contact with those who have Measles. **Be sure to keep a record of all immunizations.**