

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET



COUNTY MICHIGAN
HEALTH DIVISION

Department of Health & Human Services

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Measles

What is Measles?

Measles is a rash illness caused by a virus.

Who can get Measles?

Anyone who has not had a confirmed case of measles (mostly people born after 1956) and who have not been given a measles vaccine.

What are the symptoms?

- hard dry cough.
- sneezing or runny nose.
- watery or red eyes.
- fever which rises when rash appears (101E F or higher).
- rash: red, raised, blotchy; starts on face, spreads to trunk and arms and legs.
- tiny white spots on the inner cheeks, gums, roof of the mouth surrounded by redness.

How long after exposure do symptoms first begin?

Cough, runny nose, watery eyes, and fever usually begin ten days after exposure. The rash usually appears 4 days later.

How is it spread?

Measles is easily spread by droplets from the nose, throat and mouth through sneezing, coughing and speaking. It is more commonly occurs in late winter and early spring.

How long is a person contagious?

A person can spread measles up to four days before and four days after the rash appears.

Are there complications?

Yes. 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. During pregnancy, measles may cause the loss of the unborn baby. Death due to measles is rare in the U.S.

Is there a treatment for Measles?

Bed rest at home until at least 4 days after the appearance of the rash is necessary to not infect others. There is no specific treatment for measles.

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How can Measles be prevented?

Measles can be prevented by vaccination:

- All healthy children should be vaccinated at 12-15 months with the combination shot for measles, mumps, rubella (MMR).
- A MMR booster is required after 4 years of age.
- Pregnant women should not get the vaccine and all women of childbearing age should keep out of contact with those who have measles.
- Be sure to keep a record of all immunizations. Write down when the shots were given.

What if Measles occurs at school or a day care center?

All cases must be reported to your local health department within 24 hours.

People born after 1956 who cannot prove that they have had:

- 1) Measles
or
- 2) Measles vaccine after 12 months of age and a booster dose at least one month later, should get a measles vaccine. Otherwise, they will be excluded from school/day care until at least two weeks after the beginning of the last measles case.

**For more information on Measles, call (248) 858-1406 or toll free
1 (800) 848-5533**

For additional copies, visit our website at www.oakgov.com/health.