

## **MEASLES**

### **Transmission**

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus. A sick person can infect > 90% of his contacts, 4 days before up to 4 days after the onset of rashes. It is spread directly from person to person by the inhalation of droplets from an infected person when he talks, coughs or sneezes. These droplets remain infective in the air and on surfaces for up to two hours. That's why measles is also spread indirectly by touching objects or surfaces contaminated with secretions from the nose and throat.

### **Symptoms**

Measles starts with a fever (may increase up to 105°F), increasingly severe cough, runny nose, red eyes, and sore throat; usually about 7 to 10 days after exposure but can occur up to 21 days after exposure. Two to four days after fever onset, a rash starts on the face and upper neck, and spreads down the back and trunk and extends to the arms, hands, legs and feet. The rash fades in the same order it appeared over a period of 3-4 days.

### **Prevention and Control**

Measles can be prevented with MMR vaccine, which protects against mumps and rubella as well. Two doses of MMR vaccine, the first dose at 12 - 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 - 6 years of age.

The MMR vaccine is very safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.

Teens and adults should also be up to date on their MMR vaccination. Individuals born before 1957 are presumed to be immune to measles.

If you develop the symptoms of measles, stay home and call your healthcare provider before going to the doctor's office. Review your vaccination records, describe your symptoms and alert your doctor if you have been in contact with an infected person. Also stay home and away from others, especially unvaccinated infants, people with diseases affecting their immune systems and pregnant women.

### **School Exclusion Policy**

Children with suspected or confirmed measles should be kept out of school or childcare until 4 days after the onset of rash. Rules for exclusion of sick children from school and childcare are outlined in the Texas Administrative Code, specifically [Rule 97.7](#) for schools and [Rule 746.3603](#) for childcare.

For questions and more information, please contact the Brazos County Health District at **979-361-4440**

Further information on Measles:

General Information: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idcu/disease/measles/>

CDC Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>