



Common signs of measles infection include a high fever and rash. The rash starts on the head and spreads down the rest of the body. *Courtesy of the CDC.*

Measles: What families need to know

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The number of measles cases in the United States is increasing. The best way for parents to protect their children from the virus is to get them vaccinated.

Children who get measles can get very sick. Measles can lead to pneumonia, swelling of the brain, deafness, intellectual disability and even death. Getting the measles vaccine is the best way to prevent illness.

Children should get the first dose of a measles vaccine at 12-15 months of age and a second dose when they are 4 to 6 years of age.

Measles was rare in the United States, but outbreaks are occurring in areas where vaccination rates have fallen. Most of the time, children who get measles are not up to date on recommended vaccines or are not old enough to get measles vaccine.

Measles also spreads easily. Being close to an infected person even for a short time is risky for people who are not vaccinated. An infected person can spread measles easily to others four days before symptoms appear.

Measles symptoms typically begin about eight to 12 days after a child is exposed to the virus. If your child was with someone who has measles, call your pediatrician right away. If needed, your pediatrician can arrange to have your child examined without putting others at risk.

Common signs of measles infection include a high fever and rash. The rash usually appears three to five days after the first symptoms. It starts on the head and spreads down the rest of the body.

Other measles symptoms may include:

- cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes;
- small spots in the cheek area inside the mouth;
- diarrhea and
- ear infection.

Children with measles should stay home from school or child care until at least four full days after the rash starts, when they are no longer contagious. Your pediatrician can let you know when it is safe for your child to return to school or child care.

More information about measles is available at HealthyChildren.org at <https://bit.ly/3x6xyWn>.

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