

MEASLES FACT SHEET

WHAT IS MEASLES?

Measles is a highly contagious virus. Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children.

HOW DO YOU GET MEASLES?

It can spread to others through coughing and sneezing. If other people breathe the contaminated air or touch the infected surface, then touch their eyes, noses, or mouths, they can become infected. The measles virus can live for up to two hours in an airspace where the infected person coughed or sneezed. Infected people can spread measles to others from four days before through four days after the rash appears.

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of measles generally appear about 7-14 days after a person is infected. Measles symptoms include a rash, high fever, runny nose, cough, loss of appetite and red, watery eyes. The rash usually lasts 5-6 days and begins at the hairline, moves to the face and upper neck, and proceeds down the body.

TREATMENT

There is no specific treatment for measles. Call your doctor immediately if you think you or your child has been exposed to measles.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent measles is to get the MMR vaccine. If you have measles, you should stay home for four days after you develop the rash. Staying home is an important way to not spread measles to other people. Talk to your doctor to discuss when it is safe to return. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Avoid sharing drinks or eating utensils. Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces such as toys, doorknobs, tables and counters.

HEALTH DISTRICT EFFORTS

The Health District offers the MMR vaccine. Please call (740) 203-2040 to schedule an appointment. Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Health District. The Health District investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of disease, and engages in community outreach and education.

Anyone not vaccinated against measles should be excluded from school until 21 days after the last case occurred.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO I NEED TO GET AN MMR SHOT?

Everyone should have at least one dose of MMR vaccine with just a couple exceptions:

- Those born before 1957 (and do not work in healthcare) are considered to have already been exposed and to have developed immunity.
- Those who were vaccinated between 1963 and 1968 and unsure if they received the live or killed virus should be revaccinated (the killed virus was found to be ineffective).
- If you have a suppressed immune system due to illness or medical treatment you will need to ask your doctor if it is safe to have the vaccine.
- International travelers, healthcare personnel and students at post-high school education institutions should have two doses unless they were born before 1957, have laboratory evidence of immunity, or have laboratory confirmation of disease.

I AM UNSURE IF I HAD AN MMR SHOT BEFORE, SHOULD I GET ONE NOW?

- Without a vaccine record, the only way to be sure you have immunity is have blood drawn and checked for the immunity to measles.
- There is no harm in receiving an additional dose of the MMR vaccine.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BE PROTECTED?

Generally, 90% - 95% of people develop antibodies within 14 days of a single dose.

IS THERE A MEASLES OUTBREAK IN OHIO?

Yes, there is currently a measles outbreak in central Ohio.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER GETTING THE VACCINE?

Redness and soreness around the injection site or fever may occur and should pass within a couple days.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE GO TO ANY OF THESE RESEARCH-BASED WEB SITES

- http://www.immunize.org/askexperts/experts_mmr.asp
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/general-recs/timing.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/side-effects.htm>