

Measles Disease

What is measles disease?

- Measles is a serious viral respiratory illness that lives in the nose and throat mucus of infected people.
- A single case of measles will infect up to 95% of unvaccinated people who are exposed. It is expected 12-18 cases can develop from 1 case of measles.
- Up to 20-30% of infected people, especially those children less than 5 years old, may have complications from the disease.

What are the symptoms?

- Symptoms appear 7 to 14 days after a person is infected.
- Common early symptoms include:
 - High fever, up to 105°F
 - Cough
 - Runny nose
 - Red or watery eyes
- Two to 3 days after symptoms begin, you may have:
 - Tiny white spots appear inside of the mouth.
- Three to 5 days after symptoms begin, you could also have:
 - A rash of flat red spots appear on the face and spread to the neck, chest, arms, legs, and feet.
 - Small raised bumps may appear on the flat red spots.
- Common complications may include ear infections, hearing loss, and diarrhea.
- Severe complications may include pneumonia, swelling of the brain, and death.

How does measles disease spread?

- Measles is very contagious and lives up to 2 hours in the air or on surfaces after an infected person has coughed or sneezed.
- People can spread measles to others 4 days before and 4 days after the rash appears.
- Measles is spread from person-to-person through
 - Coughing and sneezing
 - Touching items and surfaces the infected person has coughed or sneezed on.
- The best prevention against measles is receiving the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Where can I find more information?

- Contact your doctor or pharmacist
- Go to the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at www.alabamapublichealth.gov/imm.
- Go to www.cdc.gov and type 'measles disease' in SEARCH box.



Alabama Department of Public Health

Immunization Division, 201 Monroe St, Montgomery, AL 36104

1-800-469-4599 https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/assets/measles_flyer.pdf 06/06/24

Measles Vaccine

Who should get measles vaccine?

- Everyone from 4-6 years of age should have 2 doses of MMR vaccine, given at appropriate age and intervals, are over 97% effective in preventing measles.
- If a person has not been vaccinated and is exposed to a case of measles, 1 dose within 72 hours of exposure reduces the chance of getting measles.
- Infants and children, post-high school, and healthcare staff should get 2 doses.
- Adults born after 1956 should get 1 dose.
- Women of childbearing age should get 1 dose before getting pregnant.
- International travelers should be up-to-date for MMR before traveling.

Who should not get MMR vaccine?

- Anyone who has had a life-threatening reaction to neomycin, any component of MMR vaccine, or to a previous dose.
- Anyone who has immunocompromised issues, because it is a live-virus vaccine.
- Pregnant women should not get MMR vaccine.
- Anyone with moderate to severe illness with or without fever. Anyone with mild to moderate ill people should receive the vaccine, especially if exposed to disease.
- For more information on contraindications and precautions for MMR vaccine, please go to <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/mmr/hcp/recommendations.html>.

What are the vaccine side effects and risks?

- Getting MMR vaccine is much safer than getting measles disease and does not cause autism.
- Organizations like Autism Speaks, <https://www.autismspeaks.org/>, urge parents/guardians to vaccinate all children.
- A vaccine, like any medicine, is capable of causing side effects or a severe allergic reaction.
- Mild problems usually occur 6-14 days after vaccine may include:
 - Soreness where the shot was given, fever, and mild rash
- Moderate problems may include:
 - Seizures caused by fever, temporary pain or stiffness in the joints, temporary low platelet count
- The risk of MMR vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.
- Severe problems are so very rare, it is hard to tell if MMR vaccine caused them: Serious allergic reaction, deafness, long-term seizures, coma, lowered consciousness, and permanent brain damage.

Where can I find more information about measles disease or vaccine?

- Contact your doctor or pharmacist.
- Go to the Alabama Department of Public Health, Immunization Division, at www.alabamapublichealth.gov/imm.
- Go to www.cdc.gov and type in 'measles vaccine' in the SEARCH box.



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