

# Know the FACTS

## Measles (Rubeola)

Measles may seem like a mild illness with a rash and fever, but it can lead to serious complications, especially in children under 5. It is highly contagious, with up to 90% of unprotected people nearby becoming infected. The best protection against measles is the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine, which offers long-lasting immunity against all strains of the virus.

### Measles is a deadly disease.

About 30% of reported measles cases experience one or more complications. Nearly 1-3 of every 1,000 children who become infected with measles in the United States will die from respiratory and neurologic complications. Complications from measles are more common among people younger than 5 years or older than 20, as well as among pregnant people or those with weakened immune systems. As many as one out of every 20 children with measles gets pneumonia, the most common cause of death from measles in young children.



### Measles is a preventable disease.

The World Health Organization declared in 2000 that measles was eliminated in the United States. It's rare that people who are vaccinated against measles become infected, but those who do typically experience a milder illness and are less likely to spread the virus than unvaccinated people do. Most people who are vaccinated will be protected for life.

### Measles is highly contagious.

Measles spreads through coughing, sneezing and talking. Symptoms generally appear 7-14 days after a

person is exposed to the virus, usually beginning with a fever, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. Two to three days after symptoms begin, tiny white spots may appear inside the mouth followed by a blotchy red rash that begins at the hairline and spreads downward. Measles rashes typically are not itchy.

People infected with measles can spread the virus to others from four days before the rash appears through four days after the rash appears.

The measles virus can stay suspended in air for up to two hours after an infected person has left the area. Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of the people who have been exposed to an infected person and who are not immune will also become infected.

### Measles vaccinations are safe and have been proven to protect against the disease.

MMR (a combination of measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines) vaccines have been around for decades and protect most of the population against measles. Two doses of the MMR vaccine are 97% effective against measles, while one dose is 93% effective.

Scientists in the United States and other countries have carefully studied the MMR vaccine, finding that vaccination does not interfere with breastfeeding and does not represent a link to autism.

Almost everyone who has not had the MMR vaccine will get sick if they are exposed to measles, mumps or rubella. Vaccination limits the size, duration and spread of outbreaks.

During measles outbreaks, those without presumptive evidence of immunity should be brought up to date on their MMR vaccination.



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## **Measles vaccinations typically start early in life.**

The CDC recommends that most children get two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12-15 months and the second dose at age 4-6 years. Teens and adults are considered up to date on their MMR vaccination if they've had the two doses.

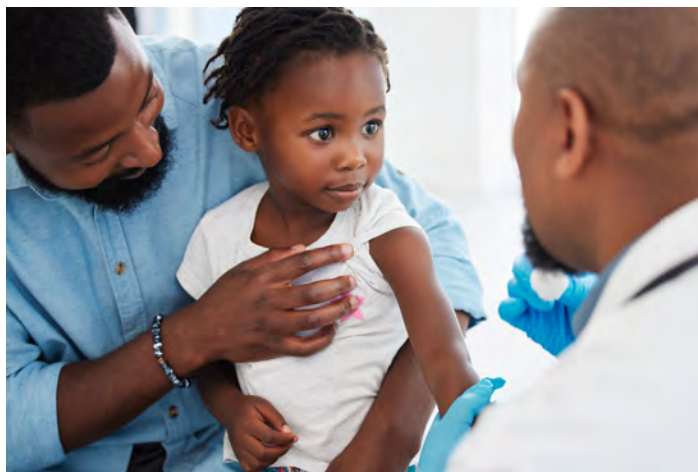
## **Measles booster vaccinations aren't recommended for most adults right now.**

Most adults who have had two measles vaccinations are protected, but additional vaccination isn't harmful. Most vaccinated adults are immune to measles and do not need a booster shot.

Adults who were born after 1957 or who received vaccinations prior to 1968 may have less protection and may want to discuss a booster vaccination with their physician. There are additional considerations for some people, including those who are immunocompromised, who are pregnant, who frequently travel the world or who are in high-risk industries and locations.

## **Measles vaccinations typically are required for school or childcare.**

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have state laws that require children entering childcare or public schools to have certain vaccinations. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that all states require children entering childcare or students starting school, college or other postsecondary educational institutions to be up to date on MMR vaccination.



## **Measles vaccinations usually are covered by health insurance.**

All plans from the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) health insurance marketplace and most private insurance plans cover certain preventative immunizations without charging a copayment or coinsurance when provided by an in-network provider; measles vaccinations typically are included in these plans. In addition, the CDC's Vaccines for Children (VFC) program provides vaccines at no cost to eligible children through health care providers enrolled in the program.

## **Find more information and resources here:**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**  
[cdc.gov/measles](https://cdc.gov/measles)

**Ohio Department of Health:** [odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/vaccine-preventable-diseases/resources/measles](https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/vaccine-preventable-diseases/resources/measles)

