



*"Striving Toward a **Healthier** Community."*

Measles Fast Facts

What is measles?

- A highly contagious virus that can lead to serious complications.
- If one person has measles, about 9 out of 10 unvaccinated people around them also become infected.
- A vaccine-preventable disease.
- Measles in a childcare center can be threatening to health and disruptive to learning.

What are the *symptoms* of measles?

- Early non-specific symptoms include a high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes 7-14 days after contact with the measles virus.
- Tiny white spots (Koplik spots) may appear inside the mouth 2-3 days after symptoms begin.
- About 3-5 days after first symptoms, a red blotchy rash begins at the hairline, then spreads to the face and upper neck and continues to progress down the body, reaching the hands and feet.

How is measles *spread*?

- Droplets enter the air when an infected person talks, coughs, or sneezes.
- Respiratory droplets can infect others directly through their eyes, nose, or mouth and indirectly through contaminated toys and shared surfaces.
- Measles can live in the air and infect others up to 2 hours after an infected person leaves the area.
- Measles can spread to others up to 4 days before rash appears and 4 days after.

What are *complications* of measles?

- Complications can include ear infections, diarrhea, pneumonia, brain swelling, and death.
- Complications are more likely in children less than 5 years, adults older than 20 years, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems.
- One out of every 5 unvaccinated persons with measles is hospitalized.

How can *you* help prevent measles?

- Vaccination with the MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine is the best way to prevent measles.
 - Promote vaccination to protect the health of Stark County. One dose of MMR is 93% effective, and 2 doses are 97% effective at preventing measles.
 - Encourage individuals to speak with their doctor about their vaccination status.
 - All children aged 12 months and older are recommended to receive a first dose of MMR vaccine.
 - A second dose of MMR is recommended at 4-6 years of age.
 - Encourage staff to confirm they have been vaccinated against measles, and ask their provider about MMR if they are not immune from vaccine or past infection.
- Promote infection control.
 - Teach children to cover their nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing with a tissue, or a sleeve or elbow if tissues are not available, then dispose of used tissues and wash hands.
 - Make hand washing a frequent and fun part of the daily routine.
 - Clean hands before and after any activity involving food or touching the mouth, nose, and eyes.
 - Clean and disinfect toys and shared surfaces frequently.
- Be alert for symptoms of measles and notify parents to seek healthcare immediately.
 - Promptly notify local health department officials of any suspected measles cases.
 - Follow health department recommendations for disinfection and support public health in notification of potential contacts of a measles case.