

Why is everyone talking about Measles (Rubella)?



Measles is far more contagious (easy to spread between people) than most other viruses like Covid-19, Influenza, or even the common cold. It is very likely that if one person in a household develops measles, everyone in that house that isn't immune will also catch it.

Due to immunization, Measles was officially eliminated from the United States in 2000. This means that enough people were immunized in the United States that no cases were spreading within the country. The only cases in the United States until recently were in people who had travelled to other countries and caught it there.

Since measles wasn't active in the United States, some people decided not to immunize themselves or their children after 2000. Unfortunately, measles is now making a comeback and affecting families and close groups in people that are unvaccinated and not immune to the virus.

In 2023, there were only 59 total cases in the US. In 2024, there were 285 cases. So far, in the first three months of 2025, there have already been over 800 cases in the United States.

Post-exposure quarantine: The CDC (and multiple states) recommend that unvaccinated non-immune individuals should quarantine for 21 days after last known exposure to prevent the spread to other non-immune persons.

Some people have expressed concerns about vaccines causing autism. Almost all cases of autism are diagnosed between the ages of 4-7. People don't develop autism later in life. Many studies have shown there isn't a connection between vaccines and autism, but the concern should even be less for anyone that is already over 5 years of age.

While the routine immunization schedule is two doses around one year of age and 5 years of age, it can be given as early as 6 months of age. Older children, teenagers and adults can become immune with two doses given a month apart.

The MMR vaccine doesn't cause measles infection. After immunization, most people will have a low grade fever and body aches like with most vaccines. About 5% of people may develop a mild rash 5-14 days after getting immunized.

Even if you develop fever and rash after the vaccine, you are not contagious. After getting vaccinated, you may test positive for the virus for up to a month after receiving vaccine.

Everyone born before 1957 is considered immune to measles due to natural exposure. You can get tested for immunity to measles that could have happened decades ago naturally.

Adams Memorial Hospital offers a Direct Access Measles blood test done without a doctor's order for about \$25.