Pennsylvania
Department of Health

Measles: What You Need to Know



1. Measles is a preventable disease that can lead to serious health issues and death.
2. Vaccines provide the best protection against getting sick from measles.
3. Measles spreads through the air, often from an infected person's cough or sneeze. *Measles can stay in the air for up to two hours after a sick person has left the room.*
4. Symptoms usually begin 7 to 21 days after exposure to someone who is infected. *Seek supportive care if symptoms begin.*

Watch for symptoms, especially if you were exposed.

Measles starts with symptoms that are common with other diseases: a high fever, runny nose, cough, red/watery eyes, and sore throat.

Tiny white spots can appear inside the mouth 2 or 3 days after symptoms begin.

Rash with flat red spots appears on the face and neck and spreads down the body usually 3 to 5 days after symptoms begin.



Other symptoms to look out for are ear infections, lack of appetite, swollen lymph nodes, and diarrhea (especially in infants).

If untreated, measles can lead to severe complications including pneumonia (lung infection), swelling of the brain, and death.

Talk to your health care provider at the first sign of symptoms.

Typical Infection Timeline

Measles can be passed on for
4 days before + 4 days after rash appears

EXPOSURE OCCURS	7–21 days from exposure	SYMPTOMS BEGIN	RASH APPEARS	SYMPTOMS SUBSIDE
		Fever, runny nose, cough, red/watery eyes, sore throat		Health returns to normal

For more measles information, visit www.pa.gov/measles.