Monroe County Health Department

MEASLES:
WHAT YOUR FAMILY NEEDS TO KNOW

WHAT IS MEASLES?

Measles is a sickness that spreads easily from person to person. It is caused by a virus and spreads through the air when someone coughs or sneezes. Measles has been found in Wisconsin. Measles is continuing to spread.



HOW IT SPREADS

- From coughing or sneezing.
- Can spread 4 days before the rash shows up through 4 days after.
- The virus can stay in the air or on things like tables for up to 2 hours.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms usually start 7-14 days after being around someone who is sick.
- Starts like a cold with a runny nose, cough, and red or watery eyes.
- Fever is common and can reach 104°F or more.
- Rash appears 3-5 days after the cold symptoms. The rash starts on the head and spreads down the body.
- You may feel very tired and not feel like eating.
- Sometimes, people can also get an ear infection, diarrhea, or a lung infection (pneumonia).

Measles can cause serious problems like a lung infection, blindness, brain swelling, or even death. Babies, pregnant women, and older adults are most at risk for these problems.

IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IN YOUR HOME HAS THE MEASLES

- Call your doctor right away.
- Stay home so you don't spread the sickness.
- **Go to the emergency room or call 911** if you have:
  - Trouble breathing
  - Blue color around your mouth
  - Feeling confused
  - Very bad weakness

HAVE SOMEONE CALL BEFORE YOU GET THERE. TELL THE HOSPITAL OR 911 THAT A PERSON WHO MIGHT HAVE MEASLES IS COMING.

If you have been near someone who has the measles, stay home and call your doctor or the Monroe County Health Department right away (608-269-8666). Getting the MMR vaccine within 3 days can stop you from getting sick if you are not up-to-date on your shots.

The Monroe County Health Department has free vaccine available for individuals with Badgercare Plus or who do not have health insurance. Call to schedule an appointment.

Exposed to measles?
Here's what you need to know.

Monroe County Health Department

What does "exposed" mean?

You were "exposed" if you were in the same room as someone with measles - at the same time or within 2 hours after they left. Measles is very contagious.

If you have been exposed:

MMR vaccine protects you from Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. The MMR vaccine is safe and has been used for over 50 years. Kids receive 2 doses. The first dose is recommended at age 1 and the second between ages 4-6.

If you have never had the MMR vaccine and were born in or after 1957:

- Get your first MMR shot within 72 hours of being exposed to measles. This may prevent you from getting sick and reduce the time you need to quarantine. Contact the Health Dept to discuss when you can safely leave quarantine.
- If you do not choose to get your first MMR vaccine, you must quarantine for 21 days after your last exposure. Quarantine means staying home and away from other people, even if you don't feel sick. Do not go to school, work, stores, or other public places. If you do not get sick after 21 days, you can return to normal activities.

If you had 1 MMR shot:

- Get your second MMR shot within 3 days (if you can).
- Watch for symptoms for 21 days.
- Stay home until you talk with the Monroe County Health Department (608-269-8666) to discuss when you can safely be around others.

If you had 2 MMR shots OR were born before 1957:

- Watch for symptoms for 21 days.
- You don't need to stay home unless you start to feel sick. Avoid high-risk settings such as nursing and long-term care facilities.

If you are pregnant, under 1 year old, or have a weak immune system, call your doctor. Some people may not be able to receive the MMR vaccine.

If you do have measles:

- Stay home and away from other people. Do not go to work, school, shopping, or other public places.
- Call your doctor before going to a clinic or hospital. Tell them you have measles.
- Stay home until 5 days after the rash started.
- **If you are unsure, or would like to just talk with a nurse about measles, please call us! 608-269-8666**