



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Butler County**  
General Health District

# MEASLES:

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT IS MEASLES?

Measles is an infection caused by a virus. Once quite common, measles can now almost always be prevented with a vaccine.

### WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone who has not been immunized or had measles in the past is at risk. Babies younger than 12 months are at risk because they are too young to have been vaccinated.

### HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Measles spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

People can spread measles before they show symptoms.

### IS IT CONTAGIOUS?

Measles is very contagious. Some people think of measles as just a little rash and fever that clears up in a few days, but measles can cause serious health complications, especially in children younger than 5 years of age.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- High fever (may spike to more than 104° F),
- cough,
- runny nose (coryza),
- red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis), and
- rash (3-5 days after symptoms begin).

Symptoms usually last 7-10 days.

### HOW CAN I PREVENT MEASLES?

The best protection against measles is measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. MMR vaccine provides long-lasting protection against all strains of measles.

Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective.

### WHO SHOULD GET THE MEASLES-MUMPS-RUBELLA (MMR) VACCINE?

**Children** - Children should receive two doses of MMR vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12-15 months of age and the second dose at 4-6 years of age or at least 28 days following the first dose.

**Teenagers and Adults with no evidence of immunity.** Evidence of immunity includes at least one of the following: written documentation of adequate vaccination, laboratory evidence of immunity, laboratory confirmation of measles, or birth in the United States before 1957.

### HOW CAN INFANTS UNDER 12 MONTHS BE PROTECTED?

If parents or caregivers have not gotten the MMR vaccine or had measles in the past, they should get vaccinated. It is important to make sure people who are around your new baby do not expose your baby to measles and other diseases (like whooping cough).

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### SHOULD PREGNANT PEOPLE GET THE MEASLES VACCINE (MMR)?

Pregnant people should NOT get the MMR vaccine. Adults of childbearing age should avoid getting pregnant for at least four weeks after receiving MMR vaccine.

#### HOW IS MEASLES TREATED?

There is no cure for measles. Over-the-counter medications can help relieve the fever. Other symptoms usually disappear within 2-3 weeks.

#### WHAT IF I WAS EXPOSED TO SOMEONE WITH MEASLES?

Call your healthcare provider right away so that they can tell you what to do next. Stay away from others if you have already developed symptoms and see the section below.

#### WHAT IF I HAVE MEASLES?

If you have measles, you should stay home for four days after you develop the rash. Staying home is an important way to not spread measles to other people. Ask your healthcare provider when it is safe to be around other people again.

You should also

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid sharing drinks or eating utensils.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs, tables, and counters. Standard household disinfectants will readily kill the measles virus.

#### WHERE CAN I GET THE MEASLES (MMR) VACCINE FOR MY CHILD(REN) ?

Call our Nursing Department at **513-887-5253** to make an appointment.

#### WHERE CAN I GET THE MEASLES (MMR) VACCINE FOR MYSELF ?

Call your healthcare provider for recommendations and to verify your lack of immunity.



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