Measles

What you need to know

FAIRFIELD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
DEACONESS ILLINOIS PARTNER

What is measles?

Measles is an illness that spreads very easily from person to person. It spreads through the air when a sick person coughs, sneezes or talks. **The measles virus can stay in the air for up to two hours** after a sick person leaves the room.

Watch for signs



High Fever



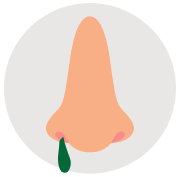
Cough



Rash



Red and/or Watery Eyes



Runny Nose

Measles can cause serious problems, including:

- A lung infection called pneumonia
- Brain swelling
- In rare cases, death

Who is more likely to get very sick?

Anyone can get measles, but people who have not been vaccinated are more likely to get sick.

- Children under age 5
- People who get sick easily
- Pregnant patients

The measles vaccine helps keep you from getting measles. If you received immune globulin (IG) to protect you after an exposure, talk with your doctor before getting the MMR vaccine. You will need to wait at least 6 months, or longer depending on the type of IG you received.

What to do if you think you have measles

1. **Were you near someone with measles?**
   Call your doctor or local health department right away, even if you feel well. There may be ways to keep you from getting sick.

2. **Stay home and away from others.**
   Measles spreads very easily. You can spread measles before you know you are sick.

3. **Know when you can spread measles.**
   You can spread measles to someone else from **4 days before a rash begins to 4 days after the rash starts (rash = day 0).** Symptoms start 7 to 21 days after being around someone with measles, and most people start to feel sick after 10 to 12 days. The rash shows up a few days after you start feeling sick.

4. **Call your doctor right away and before you go to their office.**
   Tell them you think you might have measles, and they will tell you what to do next. This is important so you don't get others sick.

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