



Rubella (German Measles)

What causes it?

Rubella is a viral infection that is usually mild in children and young adults. It primarily involves the upper airway, and is usually spread by coughing, sneezing and runny nose.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are low grade fever, swollen glands in the neck or behind the ears, an upper respiratory infection and a flat red rash that usually starts on the arms and legs and then on the rest of the body.

How is it diagnosed?

The infection is diagnosed by a blood test.

How is it treated?

There is no treatment for the infection. Your health care provider may prescribe medication to relieve the fever and some of the symptoms. **The infection can be prevented by the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) immunization, which is usually given between 12-15 months of age and between 4-6 years of age.** During the teen years, a MMR vaccination may be given if the child has not had the previous two vaccinations. The vaccine is especially important for women of childbearing age and must be given **before** pregnancy.

School/Child Care Precautions

- Notify parents and staff that a case of rubella has occurred so any women who may be pregnant can consult with their physicians regarding their immune status.
- Teach children to cover their noses and mouths when coughing and sneezing, preferably by using a tissue or coughing on or sneezing into their sleeves at the elbow bend.
- Wash hands often after coughing and sneezing.
- Use a tissue only one time then throw it in the trash.
- Clean facilities – toys, sinks, toilets, water fountains, table tops—at least daily with a solution recommended by the Department of Public Health.
- Watch for symptoms among staff or students.
- Call the Department of Public Health if you suspect any illness.
- All immunization records should be current and ready for review including a list of personal exemptions.

Special Note: Parents are advised to avoid the use of aspirin in children who have flu-like symptoms or chickenpox. Aspirin use may increase the risk of Reye's Syndrome. Consult your health care provider for substitutions.

For more information call the Guilford County Department of Public Health at 336-641-7777 or visit www.myguilford.com