



Measles (Rubeola)

What causes it?

Measles (Rubeola) is a highly contagious viral infection. It is spread easily from person to person through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are fever, red eyes, runny nose and eyes, cough, chills, sore throat, headache, muscle aches, and a red-brown, blotchy rash starting on the face and moving to the rest of the body. Most children with measles are quite ill, but recover with no ill effects. However, some develop ear infections, pneumonia, croup, diarrhea or encephalitis (brain swelling). Infants and adults often have the more serious cases.

How is it treated?

There is no medicine for the disease. Your health care provider may recommend a medication to relieve the symptoms or to treat complications of measles. **Measles can be prevented by the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine series.** North Carolina law requires children to receive two doses of measles-containing vaccine: dose one at 12-15 months of age and dose two (at least 30 days later) before Kindergarten/First Grade entry.

School/Child Care Precautions

Children with measles should be kept from school/child care for four days after the rash appears. They may need to stay out longer if they don't feel well and/or can't participate in usual classroom activities.

Home/School/Child Care Precautions

- Teach children good hand washing practices.
- Teach children to cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing and then to wash their hands.
- Use tissue one time and discard tissue in trash can.
- Disinfect toys, sinks, water fountains, and table tops daily with a solution recommended by the Division of Public Health.
- Watch for symptoms of illness among staff or students.

If a case of measles occurs, staff should **immediately notify the Division of Public Health.** The Division of Public Health will decide if a special immunization program or other treatment is needed for those in close contact with the infected person. Also:

- Notify parents. Any children and adults who are not immunized should be immunized or kept from school or child care until 21 days after the rash appears in the last case of measles in the facility.
- Closely observe all children for symptoms and refer anyone developing symptoms to their health care provider.
- Follow appropriate group separation practices in large facilities.

Special Note

Parents are advised to avoid the use of aspirin in children who have flu-like symptoms or chicken pox. Ask your health care provider about other medicines for fever or pain.

For more information, call the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health at (336) 641-7777 or visit our website at www.guilfordcountync.gov

Free language assistance available upon request.