

MEASLES FACT SHEET



Lenawee County
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is Measles?

Measles (rubeola) is an extremely contagious disease caused by the measles virus. It can cause complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). It can also cause miscarriages or premature delivery in pregnant women.

What are the symptoms?

- High fever
- Slightly sensitive to light
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes

Two or three days after symptoms begin, tiny white spots (Koplik spots) may appear inside the mouth

Three to five days after symptoms begin, a rash breaks out

How can it be prevented?

- **Best way is to be vaccinated**
- Teenagers and adults who do not know if they are protected against measles should ask their health care provider about the **MMR** vaccine

Pregnant women should NOT receive the live vaccine and ALL women of childbearing age should avoid anyone with measles

How can it be spread?

- When an infected person sneezes or coughs in the air of another person
- Measles can be airborne; droplets can remain in the air can remain infectious for 2 hours . If infected air is inhaled, you can become sick.
- You are more likely to get measles during late winter and early spring
- **A person is contagious for 4 days BEFORE and 4 days AFTER the rash forms**

How it is treated?

- No specific medicine for measles
- Getting plenty of rest, fluids
- Non-aspirin products (acetaminophen, ibuprofen) can be used to reduce fever and discomfort

Aspirin should NOT be used in children with viral illnesses since there have been cases associated with the development of Reyes Syndrome