



Measles: What Everyone Should Know

What are Measles?

Measles is an illness caused by a virus. Measles, also called rubeola, most often occurs during childhood. But adults can also get the disease.

Measles is contagious and is spread through the air when a person coughs or sneezes. If a person gets the measles, it takes 7 to 14 days for symptoms to appear, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Symptoms may include:

- Fever.
- Runny nose.
- Red, watery eyes.
- Hacking cough.
- White spots that resemble grains of salt on the inside of the cheeks.
- A red rash that starts on the face and neck and spreads downward.

The symptoms of measles usually start to go away in 7 to 10 days. But in severe cases, measles may cause complications such as ear and chest infections, diarrhea and brain swelling (encephalitis). Children under the age of 5 and adults over the age of 20 are most likely to develop complications.

What do I do if I think a member of my family has the measles?

Call your doctor right away and let them know about the symptoms so they can tell you what to do next. If it is after hours, call and go to the nearest Urgent Care or Emergency Room.

What can I do to prevent measles?

Vaccines are the best way to prevent measles infection.

Being properly immunized is important to you and your child's health. Children who aren't immunized at the right times are more likely to develop an illness that could cause problems such as brain damage, blindness, deafness, paralysis or even death.



But by doing your part and making sure your kids get the shots they need, you're improving their odds for a healthy childhood.

Adults who have not had measles or the vaccine should consider getting the measles vaccine if they plan to go to college, work in the health care field or travel outside of the country.

Where can I get vaccinated?

Call your doctor and ask to be vaccinated. Or call the Ventura County Public Health Department at 1-805-981-5211 or 711 to speak with someone about scheduling an appointment.

For more information about measles, [click here](#) to visit the Ventura County Public Health, Immunization Program's website or [click here](#) to visit the CDC's website.