

MEASLES FACT SHEET

Measles is a serious respiratory disease (in the lungs and breathing tubes). It causes a rash and fever. It is very contagious. In rare cases, it can be deadly. Measles is so contagious that 90 percent of unvaccinated people will get it, if exposed.



What are the symptoms of measles?

Measles starts with a fever that can get very high. Some of the other symptoms that may occur are:

- Cough, runny nose, and red eyes
- Rash of tiny, red spots (starts on head)
- Diarrhea
- Ear infection

Is measles serious?

Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. For some children, measles can lead to:

- Pneumonia (a serious lung infection)
- Lifelong brain damage
- Deafness
- Death



**1 in 5 people
will be hospitalized**



How does measles spread?

- Measles spreads when a person infected with the measles virus breathes, coughs, or sneezes.
- You can catch measles just by being in a room where a person with measles has been, up to two hours after that person is gone.
- And you can catch measles from an infected person even before they have a measles rash.
- Almost everyone who has not had the MMR shot will get measles if they are exposed to the measles virus.

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Two doses of the MMR vaccine are recommended for children by healthcare providers as the best way to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR).

When should my child get the MMR shot?

One dose at each of the following ages:

1st Dose 12-15 months

2nd Dose 4-6 years

Before traveling to another country, infants 6 to 11 months should get 1 dose of the MMR shot.

Why should my child get the MMR shot?

- Protects your child from measles, a potentially serious disease, as well as mumps and rubella.
- Protects your child from getting an uncomfortable rash and high fever from measles.
- Keeps your child from missing school or child care and you from missing work.

What are the side effects of the shot?

Most children don't have any side effects from the shot. The side effects that do occur are usually mild and may include:

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given
- Fever
- Mild rash
- Temporary pain and stiffness in the joints
- More serious side effects are rare. These may include high fever that could cause a seizure.

Follow the vaccine schedule

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Family Physicians, and American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommend children receive all vaccines according to the recommended [vaccine schedule](#).
- [Get a list of vaccines](#) that your child may need based on age, health conditions, and other factors.

The MMR vaccine is safe and effective

- The measles shot is very safe and is effective at preventing measles. Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. These are usually mild and go away on their own.
- Scientists in the United States and other countries have carefully studied the MMR shot. None has found a link between autism and the MMR shot.

Before, during and after shots

Prepare for your child's vaccine visit and learn about how you can:

- Research vaccines and ready your child before the visit
- Comfort your child during the appointment
- Care for your child after the shot
- Visit the [CDC website](#)