



## Measles (Rubeola) Fact Sheet

Developed by the Washington State Department of Health

**Description** Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. It is also known as '10- day,' 'hard' or 'red' measles. Do not confuse this illness with rubella which is sometimes called 'German' or '3-day' measles.

**Symptoms** (last about a week) Rash, high fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes.

**Complications** Can include diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, encephalitis, seizures, and death.

**Transmission** Droplet or airborne spread of the virus from the nose and mouth of a person who is infected. This is usually from sneezing, coughing or direct contact with items touched by a person with the disease. Airborne transmission can occur for up to two hours after a person with measles has been in a closed area.

**Vaccine** Measles vaccine (in the form of MMR, MR or measles only vaccines) can prevent this disease.

### **Which Adults Need Measles (Rubeola) Vaccine?**

**You should consider getting a measles vaccination if you were born in 1957 or later, AND:**

- You have never had a measles vaccination or MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) **OR**
- You had a measles vaccination prior to 1968 **OR**
- You do not have a history of having had measles or a blood test that shows immunity to measles.

You are not required to get a blood test before getting measles vaccination.

Most adults need only one measles vaccination. A second dose of measles vaccine is recommended for health care workers and at the time of an exposure to measles. Also adults who were born in 1957 or later, who have had only one measles vaccination dose, and who are traveling outside the U.S. are recommended to get a second dose of measles vaccine prior to travel.

### **Which Children Need Measles (Rubeola) Vaccine?**

- Any child 12 months age or older who have not previously been immunized with a measles vaccination.
- It is recommended that children receive a second dose between ages four to six years or 11 to 12 years. Both doses must have been given on or after the first birthday and at least 28 days apart.

**When there is an outbreak of measles at a school or in a childcare setting, public health may require measles vaccination or may prevent children who are not immunized from attending school or childcare until the measles outbreak is over. Children who have had only one measles vaccination dose and who are traveling outside the U.S. are recommended to get a second dose of measles vaccine prior to travel.**