

MEASLES

WHAT IS MEASLES?

- Measles is an acute, highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a virus.
- It is also known as rubeola.
- It is not the same as German measles (rubella).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Fever
- Blotchy rash
- Red, watery eyes
- Feeling achy or run-down
- White or bluish-white spots inside the mouth (Koplik's spots)

HOW IS THE VIRUS SPREAD?

- Measles is transmitted person-to-person through large respiratory droplets.
- The virus becomes airborne when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Non-infected people may become infected by inhaling the virus or by touching their nose or mouth after touching a contaminated surface.
- The virus can survive for two hours in droplets in the air and on contaminated surfaces.
- An infected person can be highly contagious from four days before until four days after a rash appears.

WHY IS VACCINATION IMPORTANT?

- Approximately 30% of reported measles cases have one or more complications, which include diarrhea, ear infection, pneumonia, seizures, pregnancy complications, inflammation of the brain, blindness, and death.
- Measles is so contagious that 90% of people who are not immune will likely get the disease if they have contact with an infected individual.
- When you are vaccinated against measles, you protect not only yourself. By not getting the disease, you help protect those who cannot be vaccinated, such as infants.

HOW CAN I PREVENT INFECTION?

- Get your child fully vaccinated with two MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) shots.
 - ⇒ 1st dose: age 12-18 months
 - ⇒ 2nd dose: age 4-6 years
- Get fully vaccinated as soon as possible if you are unvaccinated and have not had measles. The two vaccinations must be at least four weeks apart.
- Do not allow an infected person to interact with others until four days after the rash appears.
- Keep non-immunized people away from infected individuals.
- Share this information with your family and friends.

MEASLES IN DEKALB COUNTY

The number of measles cases in DeKalb County between 2004 and 2013 was low because of successful vaccination programs. Only one measles case was confirmed. The patient acquired the disease outside the U.S.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Call the DeKalb County Board of Health at (404) 294-3700 or visit www.dekalbhealth.net for the nearest vaccination clinic and more information.

Sources: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/index.html>; <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/meas.html>; <http://www.vaccines.gov/basics/protection/>