

Measles



This information is provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for Veterans, their families, friends, volunteers, and employees. It describes measles and steps to prevent spreading the measles virus.

Measles

- Is a highly contagious respiratory disease.
- Can sometimes lead to pneumonia, ear infections, seizures, brain damage, diarrhea, and even death. These happen mostly in adults and children younger than five.
- Is caused by a virus that resides in the mucus in the nose and throat of infected people.
- Spreads from sneezes or coughs. Droplets spray into the air and can remain in the air or live on surfaces for up to two hours.
- Can be spread from about four days before a rash starts to four days afterwards.

Symptoms

- Fever
- Red eyes
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Rash

Prevention

- Ask your health care provider about vaccination.
- Know if you or others in your family have been vaccinated or have had the measles.
- Get your children vaccinated.
- Avoid contact with anyone who may have the measles.
- Clean hands often.
- Keep surfaces clean.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.

Pregnant women SHOULD NOT receive the MMR vaccine. Women should not become pregnant for 28 days following the receipt of the MMR vaccine or any of its components.

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine

- Is the best protection against the measles.
- Is safe for use, and widely used in the U.S. since 1968.
- Ask your health care provider if you need the MMR vaccine.

Generally, no vaccination needed if

- Your blood tests show you are immune to measles, mumps, and rubella.
- You already had two doses of MMR vaccine or one dose of MMR plus a second dose of measles vaccine.
- You already had one dose of MMR and are not at high risk of measles exposure.
- You were born before 1957.
- You entered military service in 1980 or later.

If you think you or someone in your family has the measles

- Contact your health care provider immediately.
- Limit contact with others until you have talked with your provider (stay home from work, school, and in a room alone).
- Follow your provider's instructions.



If you work in a medical, school, or residential setting, consult your occupational/employee health office or health care provider about whether or not you need the MMR vaccine.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Measles: www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html

MMR Vaccine: www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccination.html

MMR Vaccine Safety: www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Vaccines/MMRV/Index.html



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