

Measles

General Information:

- Measles is a viral infection also known as rubella or rubeola and is easily preventable by a vaccine.
- Measles can be serious and even deadly.
- Measles was declared eliminated from the United States (U.S.) in 2000, but in 2019, there were 1,282 individual cases of measles in 31 states.
 - This is the greatest number of cases reported in the U.S. since 1992.
 - Herd immunity may be weakening due to a drop in vaccination rates, leading to the increase in incidence.
- The majority of people who got measles were unvaccinated.
- Unvaccinated travelers or those with measles spread the disease in the U.S.
- The disease spreads in communities where there are groups of people that have not been vaccinated.

Risk Factors:

- Being unvaccinated
- Traveling internationally
- Suffering from a Vitamin A deficiency

Signs and Symptoms:

- Fever
- Dry Cough
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Tiny white spots (Koplik spots) inside the mouth
- Red, spotted rash

Diagnosis:

- Doctors can identify measles based on the characteristic rash and Koplik spots
- Blood tests can also be done to confirm measles

Treatment:

- People who are exposed to measles but who have not had the vaccine can get the vaccine within 72 hours of the exposure to provide some protection against the disease. This may prevent measles altogether or just make for milder symptoms.
- Those with weakened immune systems, pregnant people, and infants can receive an injection of proteins called immune serum globulin after exposure to measles. These antibodies can help prevent the disease or lower the severity of the symptoms when given within six days of exposure.
- Your doctor may suggest a fever reducer to lower the fever accompanied with the virus, an antibiotic if a bacterial infection develops, or Vitamin A supplements if the exposed person has a Vitamin A deficiency.

- Make sure to get plenty of rest and drink fluids!

Prevention:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the measles vaccine for children and adults.
- Infants typically get the vaccine between 12-15 months and a second dose between ages 4-5.

For more information on what to do in case of measles, call 211 or search our online database:

- www.helplinecenter.org/211database
 - Use the following keyword search items:
 - Measles

Sources:

- South Dakota Department of Health: Measles <https://doh.sd.gov/diseases/measles.aspx>
- Mayo Clinic: Measles <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/measles/symptoms-causes/syc-20374857>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Measles <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>

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