

HEALTH EDUCATION
LIBRARY FOR PEOPLE



World's largest FREE health Education library for people

We help patients to become better patients! We can help you understand your health and medical problems better so you can get better care in partnership with your Doctor.

OUR VISION

We think patients are the largest untapped healthcare resource and that Information therapy is the most Powerful Medicine !

OUR GOALS

1. Encouraging health insurance companies to invest in patient education.
2. Advocating information therapy.
3. Setting up a national network of patient education centers.
4. Developing patient educational materials in Indian Languages for the web.

For more information on this subject:
Ask the Librarian : Free Answers to any Health Questions !!

<http://www.healthlibrary.com/information.htm>

For More Info: ASK A LIBRARIAN



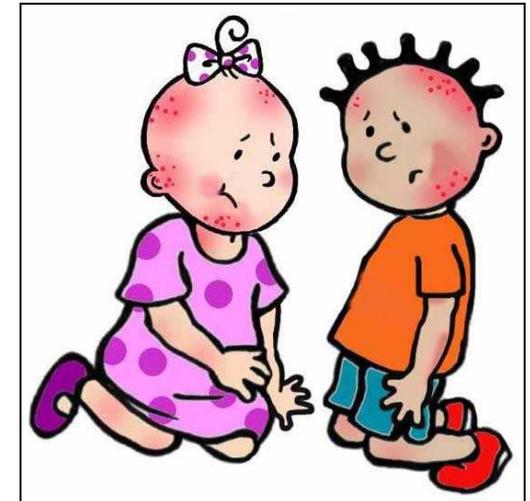
Health Education Library For People

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Measles



**LET'S HELP
ERADICATE
IGNORANCE**

Measles



Measles, also called **rubeola**, is a highly contagious respiratory infection that's caused by a virus. It causes skin rashes on the whole body and flu-like symptoms, including fever, cough, and runny nose. Measles is highly contagious — 90% of people who haven't been vaccinated for measles will get it if they live in the same household as an infected person. Measles is spread when someone comes in direct contact with infected droplets or when someone with measles sneezes or coughs and spreads virus droplets through the air. A person with measles is contagious from 1 to 2 days before symptoms start until about 4 days after the rash appears. The most important thing you can do to protect kids from measles is to have them vaccinated.

Signs and Symptoms

While measles is probably best known for the skin rashes it causes, the first symptoms of the infection are usually a hacking cough, runny nose, high fever, and red eyes. A characteristic marker of measles is **Koplik's spots**, small red spots with blue-white centers that appear inside the mouth.

The measles rash typically has a red or reddish brown blotchy appearance, and first usually shows up on the forehead, then spreads downward over the face, neck, and body, then down to the arms and feet.

Prevention

Infants are generally protected from measles for 6 months after birth due to immunity passed on from their mothers. For older kids, the measles vaccine is given at 12 to 15 months of age and again at 4 to 6 years of age. Measles vaccine is not usually given to infants younger than 12 months old. But if there's a measles outbreak, the vaccine may be given when a child is 6-11 months old, followed by the usual MMR immunization at 12-15 months and 4-6 years. Measles vaccine should not be given to pregnant women or to kids with untreated tuberculosis, leukemia or other cancers, or people whose immune systems are suppressed for any reason.

Also, the vaccine shouldn't be given to kids who have a history of severe allergic reaction to gelatin or to the antibiotic neomycin, as they are at risk for serious reactions to the vaccine. During a measles outbreak, people who have not been immunized (especially those at risk of serious infection, such as pregnant women, infants, or kids with weakened immune systems) can be protected from measles infection with an injection of measles antibodies called immune globulin if it's given within 6 days of exposure. These antibodies can either prevent measles or make symptoms less severe. The measles vaccine also may offer some protection if given within 72 hours of measles exposure. Vaccines cause side effects in some kids like fever.

Treatment

There is no specific medical treatment for measles. To help manage symptoms give your child plenty of fluids and encourage extra rest. Fever may make your child uncomfortable but remember you should never give aspirin to a child who has a viral illness since the use of aspirin in such cases has been associated with the development of Reye syndrome. Kids with measles should be closely monitored. In some cases, measles can lead to other complications, such as otitis media, croup, diarrhea, pneumonia, and encephalitis (a serious brain infection), which may require antibiotics or hospitalization. Increasing intake of Vitamin A has proved helpful for measles patients.

When to Call the Doctor

Call the doctor immediately if you suspect that your child has measles. Also, it's important to get medical care following measles exposure, especially if your child:

- is an infant
- is taking medicines that suppress the immune system
- has tuberculosis, cancer, or a disease that affects the immune system

Remember that measles, a once common childhood disease, is preventable through routine childhood immunization.

