

MEASLES: RISK AND REALITY



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of measles usually begin 10-14 days after exposure to the virus. A prominent rash is the most visible symptom. Early symptoms usually last 4-7 days. They include:

- Running nose
- Cough
- Red and watery eyes
- Small white spots inside the cheeks.

The rash begins about 7-18 days after exposure, usually on the face and upper neck. It spreads over about 3 days, eventually to the hands and feet. It usually lasts 5-6 days before fading.

WHO IS AT HIGH-RISK FOR MEASLES?

Measles can be serious in all age groups. However, there are several groups that are more likely to suffer from measles complications:

- Children younger than 5 years of age
- Adults older than 20 years of age
- Pregnant women
- People with compromised immune systems, such as from leukemia or HIV infection

SEVERE COMPLICATIONS THAT CAN OCCUR IN CHILDREN AND ADULTS

- **Hospitalization.** About 1 in 5 unvaccinated people in the U.S. who get measles is hospitalized.
- **Pneumonia.** As many as 1 out of every 20 children with measles gets pneumonia, the most common cause of death from measles in young children.
- **Encephalitis.** About 1 child out of every 1,000 who get measles will develop encephalitis (swelling of the brain) that can lead to convulsions and can leave the child deaf or with intellectual disability.
- **Death.** Nearly 1 to 3 of every 1,000 children who become infected with measles will die from respiratory and neurologic complications.
- **Complications during pregnancy.** Measles may cause pregnant women who have not had the MMR vaccine to give birth prematurely, or have a low-birth-weight baby.

***For more information on Measles, signs/symptoms and associated complications, please visit:
www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html***



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