

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
HEAD START-PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
250 South Lena Road, San Bernardino, CA 92415
(909) 387-2363 · FAX (909) 387-3313 · <http://hss.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/psd/>

Measles

What is measles? It is a serious illness that is caused by a virus. It is rare today because most children are immunized against it. It usually lasts one to two weeks with:

- Fever and fatigue
- Red and watery eyes, runny nose, and cough
- Blotchy red rash over entire body

Although most children recover from measles, it can cause pneumonia, inflammation of the brain, and death. It is particularly dangerous for:

- *Pregnant women-It can cause miscarriage or premature delivery.*
- *People with immune problems (e.g., HIV/AIDS, cancer chemotherapy, organ transplant, taking steroid medication).*

How does measles spread? It is very contagious and spreads by:

- Being in a room together, coughing, and sneezing
- Touching mucus from the nose or saliva
- Kissing on the lips
- Sharing food, eating utensils, and mouthed toys

People who have had measles or were immunized usually can't catch it again.

When is measles contagious?

- From five days *before* until four days *after* the start of the rash.
- After exposure, it can take one to two weeks for the person to get sick.

How do I know if my child has measles? If you see the symptoms, see your doctor immediately. Measles is diagnosed by the symptoms and a special blood test.

What should I do if my child has measles?

Treatment: Follow your doctor's recommendations:

- Help the child recover by encouraging rest, nutrition, and plenty of fluids to drink.
- Children with severe illness might need medication and hospitalization.

Infants, unvaccinated children and adults, people with immune problems, and pregnant women exposed to measles within the previous three to six days can get a vaccine or special injection to help prevent them getting sick.

Keep the child home: until six days after the rash appears and until he or she feels well enough to participate. Notify your Head Start program immediately.

- Immunize your children against measles at 12 to 15 months of age and again at four to six or 11-12 years.
- Report cases of measles to the local health department.
- Don't expose infants, children who have not been immunized, or pregnant women.
- Wipe noses with clean tissues, throw them away, and wash your hands.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow and away from people.
- Don't share food, pacifiers, bottles, or toothbrushes. Wash eating utensils, drinking cups, and mouthed toys well between uses.

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Measles Continued

- Don't kiss children on the mouth.
- Open windows indoors and maximize outdoor play.