

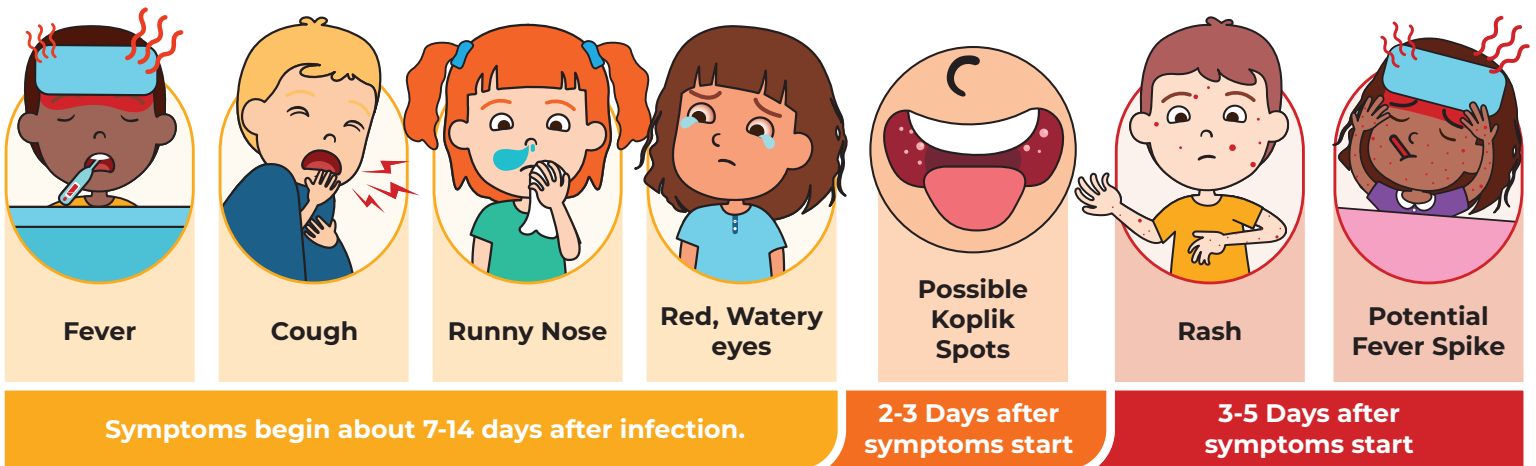
# Measles

## What is Measles?

Measles is a very contagious disease, that can cause severe illness, complications and death. The disease is reportable in Oklahoma and is caused by the measles virus. Measles is also known as rubeola, 10-day measles, hard measles, and red measles.

## What are the symptoms of measles?

Measles starts with a fever. Soon after it causes a cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. These early symptoms begin to appear about 7-14 days after a person is infected, but it can be as long as 21 days. Two to three days after symptoms begin, Koplik spots (tiny white dots) may appear inside an infected individual's mouth on the cheeks. Three to five days after symptoms begin, a rash of tiny, red flat spots appear, beginning at the hairline and spreading down the rest of the body over the next few days. When the rash appears, a person's fever may spike to more than 104° F.



## How long does measles usually last?

Symptoms may last for one to two weeks.

Measles can be serious in all age groups, however individuals at higher risk for severe illness and complications include:

- Children younger than 5 years of age.
- Adults older than 20 years of age.
- Pregnant women.
- People with compromised immune systems.

## How does the measles virus spread?

The virus can spread person-to-person through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can stay in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area and cause other people breathing that air to become infected.

Measles can also be spread by contact with nose and throat secretions from sick people, or by touching a contaminated surface. Infected people can spread the virus four days before their rash starts through four days after the rash appears.

It is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of the people exposed to the sick individual will also become infected if they are not protected (previously infected or vaccinated).

## What can someone do to protect against measles?



Measles can be prevented with an MMR vaccine.

These vaccines prevent against three diseases: measles, mumps and rubella (sometimes chickenpox with MMRV). Someone is at risk for measles if they have not been fully vaccinated or have not had measles in the past.

The vaccine is recommended for all children at 12 to 15 months of age and again as a second dose at four to six years of age. If a person has not received a second dose of the vaccine between four and six years of age, it may be given at any age thereafter.

The two doses of vaccine normally provide lifelong immunity.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the vaccine, we encourage individuals to speak with their trusted health care provider.

## Is the measles vaccine effective?

One dose is  
**93%**  
Effective

Yes, it is very effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine are about 97% effective at preventing measles, and one dose is about 93% effective.

According to the CDC very few individuals who get two doses of measles vaccine will still get measles if exposed to the virus. If someone gets the measles, but is fully vaccinated, they are more likely to have a milder illness.

## How do I know if I am protected from or vaccinated for measles?

If you're unsure whether you have received the vaccine, you can search for your records on our public portal, Shot Records ([oklahoma.gov](http://oklahoma.gov)). If you think you received measles containing vaccine as a child but were born in another state, your vaccine record may be located in that state's vaccine registry. Also look for hard copy vaccination records that may have been saved from your childhood, such as in a baby book.

If you were born in 1957 or after and are unable to locate written documentation of an MMR vaccine, immunity (positive IgG result), or infection (positive IgM result or other confirmatory test), speak with your health care provider about what to do and if you need the MMR vaccine.

## Does someone sick with measles need to isolate from others?

If an individual is diagnosed with measles, the health department will work with the individual to determine when it is safe to return to work/school/daycare/public settings. Usually, an individual can return when they have had a rash for more than four days.

## What should I do if I travel somewhere with a measles outbreak and return home feeling ill?

If you are sick with a fever within 21 days after traveling, you should call your health care provider or local county health department. At that time, you should provide them with information on your symptoms, where you traveled and your vaccine history.

After returning from a trip, it is advised to pay attention to your health for three weeks after returning.

If you think you have measles, please do not show up at any healthcare facility or health department without calling ahead of time. When you call ahead, explain your symptoms and travel history so they can tell you how they can see you while protecting other patients and healthcare providers in the building.



To learn more, scan the QR code, or visit

[oklahoma.gov/health/measles](http://oklahoma.gov/health/measles)