

# **How to Protect Your Children During a Measles Outbreak**



Recent measles outbreaks have raised concerns among parents. Most cases have occurred in unvaccinated individuals, highlighting the importance of ensuring children are fully vaccinated. Here's what you need to know:

## WHY IS MEASLES DANGEROUS?

- Measles can cause pneumonia, encephalitis (brain infection), and even death.
- Of every 1,000 measles cases, 1-2 result in death.
- Infants and those with weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable.

# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF MEASLES

- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Blotchy red or brownish rash (appears a few days after initial symptoms)









#### **INCUBATION PERIOD**

The incubation period for measles is usually 11–12 days from exposure to the virus until the first symptoms appear. These early symptoms are followed by a rash 2-4 days later, which typically lasts 5–6 days. A person with measles is contagious from 4 days before the rash appears to 4 days after it begins.

#### SUSPECTED MEASLES CASES

If you think you have measles or have been exposed to someone with measles, isolate yourself from others and call your healthcare provider.



The Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

## **HOW DOES MEASLES SPREAD?**

Through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.





By direct contact with infected fluids

The virus can live in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours.



## **MEASLES VACCINE**

#### When should children get the measles vaccine?

- First dose: 12-15 months
- Second dose: 4-6 years (or at least 28 days after the first dose)
- An MMRV combination vaccine is available for children 12 months to 12 years old.

## What if my baby is too young for the vaccine?

- High community immunization rates help protect infants under 12 months.
- Infants traveling to outbreak areas may receive early vaccination (consult your doctor).

# How long does the measles vaccine last?

One dose: 95% effective. Two doses: 97-99% effective.



### Not sure if you're vaccinated?

- Check with your doctor. There's no risk in getting an extra dose if unsure.
- Those with immune problems or on immunosuppressive medication should consult a pediatrician before vaccination.