

## ***Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Measles***

### ***What is Measles?***

Measles is an extremely contagious virus that can cause life-threatening illness in anyone who is not protected against this virus.

### ***What are the symptoms of Measles?***

Measles symptoms show up 7–14 days after exposure. They include:

- High fever (101 - 104°F)
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Koplik spots (tiny white spots in the mouth)
- Red, blotchy rash (starting on the face and spreading down the body)

### ***How is Measles diagnosed?***

- Doctors diagnose Measles through clinical symptoms and lab tests (nasopharyngeal swabs, blood tests).

### ***How can Measles be prevented?***

- The best prevention is to receive the 2 dose MMR vaccine (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella), which is required for school entry in Texas. If you travel, wear a mask and wash your hands often.

### ***Is the MMR vaccine safe?***

- Yes, the MMR vaccines is safe and works well – up to 97% effective after two doses. Most people do not have serious side effects, just mild ones like a low fever or sore arm.

### ***Can the MMR vaccine cause Autism?***

- No, the MMR vaccine does not cause autism. Many studies have shown there is no link between the vaccine and autism.

### ***Can a pregnant woman get the Measles vaccine?***

- No, pregnant women should not get the MMR vaccine until after their baby is born.

### ***Does a pregnant woman who received the Measles vaccine as a child pass on the protection to her newborn?***

- Yes, a vaccinated mother passes protection against Measles to her baby for the first few months of life beginning at birth and continues passing on the protection while breastfeeding.

### ***Who is at risk for getting Measles?***

- Adults and children who have not received the MMR Vaccine
- Babies under one year of age who are not vaccinated
- Healthcare workers who are around sick people
- Travelers coming from other countries
- Communities where not many people are vaccinated

### ***How does Measles spread?***

Measles spreads through:

- Breathing tiny droplets from the coughs or sneezes of someone who is infected.
- The virus can stay in the air for up to two hours.
- Touching surfaces that an infected person has touched.
- One person with measles can make 12 to 18 other people sick.

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### **Why is Measles making a comeback in Texas?**

- Measles is coming back because fewer people are getting vaccinated. To keep Measles away, 90 – 95% of people need to be vaccinated.
- There is a lot of wrong information about vaccines.
- People are bringing measles back when they travel.

### **What are Texas vaccine requirements for Measles?**

In Texas, kids must have the MMR vaccine to go to daycare, school, or college:

- First dose: 12–15 months old (Some exceptions may apply)
- Second dose: 4–6 years old (Some exceptions may apply)

### **What are complications of Measles?**

Measles can cause serious complications:

- Ear infections (possible hearing loss)
- Pneumonia (most common Measles-related death)
- Encephalitis (brain swelling, which can cause seizures and brain damage)
- Risk during Pregnancy (miscarriage, premature labor, low birth weight)

### **Who is at Risk of Complications Related to Measles?**

- Anyone who is unvaccinated
- Children, especially under one year of age
- Pregnant women
- People with weakened immune systems

### **What should I do if I was recently exposed to someone with Measles?**

- If vaccinated: You are at low risk. However, if you develop a rash and a fever greater than 101°F, contact your doctor for guidance.
- If unvaccinated: Call your doctor right away. You may need an MMR vaccine within 72 hours
- Immune Globulin (IG) should be given within 6 days (for infants, pregnant women, or immunocompromised people)
- Avoid public places for at least 21 days after exposure.

### **What should I do if I suspect that my family or I have Measles?**

- Call your doctor for a virtual appointment. Stay home to avoid spreading the virus and follow the guidelines from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

### **How can I check if I have received the Measles vaccines?**

- Check your immunization records to see if you have the right number of MMR vaccines doses.

### **Where can I get the Measles (MMR) vaccine in Texas?**

- Your doctor's office
- Local health departments
- Pharmacies (available for adults and some children)

### **Visit these sites to stay informed about Measles in Texas:**

- **Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS):** <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/news-alerts/Measles-outbreak-2025>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** [www.cdc.gov/Measles](http://www.cdc.gov/Measles)
- **Local health department** information: <https://www.sa.gov/Directory/Departments/SAMHD/Health-Services/Immunizations/Vaccine-Preventable-Diseases/Measles>

**If you suspect Measles or need vaccination, contact your healthcare provider Immediately.**