

This leaflet gives general advice. For further information please ask either the nursing or medical staff who are providing your care and treatment or contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team on 01386 502552.

If you would like this leaflet in a different language, larger print size, in audio, Braille or any other format please contact the

PALS team by phone on

☎ 01905 760020;

by letter ✉ Communications,
Worcestershire Health and Care Trust,
2 Kings Court, Charles Hasting Way,
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or by email 📧:

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Worcestershire
Health and Care
NHS Trust



MEASLES

What is it?

Your questions answered

**An Information Leaflet
for
Patients and Staff**

WHAT IS IT?

Measles is caused by a virus. It is usually a childhood infection and is most common in the 1-4 year old age group of children who have not been immunised. However, you can catch measles at any age.

HOW DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE HAS IT?

Measles usually begins with one or more of the following symptoms: a fever, conjunctivitis, a cough and/or spots on the cheek or in the mouth. 3–7 days later a red blotchy rash appears which spreads from the face, over the body. This rash lasts 4–7 days. The illness can be confirmed by a blood or saliva test.

IS IT INFECTIOUS?

Yes. Measles is infectious from 1 day before the first symptom appears until 5 days after the onset of the rash. It is spread by direct contact with sneezing or coughing and less often by touching freshly soiled articles such as handkerchiefs.

WHAT IS THE INCUBATION PERIOD?

The time taken from contact with the virus until the illness starts varies from 7-14 days but is usually about 10 days from exposure to measles to the onset of symptoms, it may be as long as 21 days in some cases.

IS THERE ANY TREATMENT?

There is no specific treatment for someone with measles, but Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) vaccine is routinely offered to children in the national immunisation programme at 12-15 months and at 4 years of age to provide protection and reduce the risk of contracting measles.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF SOMEONE HAS THE ILLNESS?

See a doctor but inform the surgery first that you are bringing someone you suspect has measles so that they can put you in a side waiting room.

The infected person should avoid contact with the following because measles can be more serious in them.

- Persons or babies younger than 13 months who have not been immunised.
- New-born babies.
- Immuno-suppressed persons, e.g. those with leuk-aemia, cancer, AIDS, those who are having chemotherapy or are on steroids by mouth or injection.

Ensure the infected person covers their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Make sure hands are washed after touching or treating the spots.

HOW SOON CAN THE PERSON RETURN TO WORK/THE CARE SETTING?

The person should stay away at least until 5 days after the rash first appeared and until they feel well.