

Measles (Rubeola)

Basics

Measles or rubeola is a very contagious disease caused by a virus.

Clinical presentation:

- Fever of 101°F (38.3°C) or higher, AND
- Cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis, AND
- A generalized, maculopapular rash lasting more than 3 days.

Consider measles in patients who meet the clinical presentation. Since measles is uncommon, providers should ask the patient about known exposures or travel history in the 30 days prior to symptom onset.

- **Spread:** measles spreads through the air. People who have measles spread it to others by breathing and coughing. It is highly contagious.
- **Complications:** Around 30% of measles cases have complications. One in five people with measles are hospitalized. Many people with measles have complications like diarrhea, ear infections, pneumonia, or acute encephalitis. Complications are more common in children under 5 years of age and adults older than 20. Measles during pregnancy increases the risk of premature labor, miscarriage, and low birth weight infants.
- **Treatment:** there is no specific treatment for measles. People with measles need bed rest, fluids, and control of fever.
- **Vaccination is the best way to prevent measles!**

Most measles cases in Minnesota are linked to international travel. People who are eligible for the MMR or MMRV vaccine should consider getting vaccinated before traveling abroad.

For more information, visit [Measles \(Rubeola\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/measles) (www.health.state.mn.us/measles).

Lab Testing

Testing is available at the MDH Public Health Lab:

- **Clinical diagnosis** must be confirmed with laboratory testing.
- **Specimen collection** for PCR should be done as soon as possible after rash onset.
 - A throat swab, day 0-5 of rash.
 - Throat swab and urine specimen, day 6-9 of rash.
- **Specimen submission to MDH:**
 - **Complete** the General Infectious Disease Laboratory Submission Form (PDF) found under the MDH submission, testing and supply order form found on Forms for the Infectious Disease Laboratory (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html).
 - **Label** all tubes/containers with patient name, date specimen collected, and specimen type.

Reporting

What to report?	Measles must be reported to MDH immediately 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
How to report?	Call 651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414 immediately to report measles.
Who can report?	Health practitioners are required to report to the MDH under Minnesota state law.

Submission of clinical materials to MDH is required by law.

- Patients should stay home until measles is ruled out and exam room should be closed for 2 hours after patients have left.
- The submitting facility is responsible for communicating results to patients. MDH will not report results to patients.

For pictures of measles symptoms, visit

Immunize.org: Measles Images

(www.immunize.org/clinical/image-library/measles/).