



# DISEASE PREVENTION

## Measles

### What is measles?

Measles is a very contagious disease caused by the measles virus. Measles begins with a high fever, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. After three to five days, a rash starts on the face and spreads to other parts of the body. In some cases, measles can cause hospitalizations, brain swelling, pneumonia, and death. Children under 5 years of age, those with weak immune systems, and pregnant people are most at risk.

### Common Symptoms

High Fever



Cough



Runny Nose



Red, Watery Eyes



Full Body Rash



### How is measles spread?

A sick person can spread measles by coughing, sneezing, breathing, or talking. People can get measles when they breathe this air or if they get the virus on their hands and touch their face. Measles stays in the air for up to two hours, so people can get measles even after a sick person has left the area.

### Stay At Home and Call Your Doctor

If you have symptoms of measles, call your doctor's office. They will give you special instructions to avoid getting others sick. It's important not to spread measles to others. Stay at home if you have measles. Don't have visitors if you have a fever or rash. People infected with measles can spread the disease to others up to one week before symptoms appear. A quarter to half of people infected with measles will not have symptoms.

### Protect Your Family From Measles

- The measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is the strongest protection against measles.
- The MMR vaccine is safer than getting sick with measles.
- Children are recommended to get the MMR vaccine at one year and four years of age.
- People can still get the MMR vaccine if they didn't get it as a child.
- People should get vaccinated two weeks before travel to different countries.
- The United States and other countries still have measles outbreaks.
- Getting vaccinated protects yourself, your family, and your community from getting sick.
- Talk to a trusted doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or Whitman County Public Health if you have questions.

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Information adapted from Washington State Department of Health (DOH)

