

Measles

Definition: Measles is a respiratory disease caused by a virus. The disease of measles and the virus that causes it share the same name. The disease is also called rubeola. Measles virus normally grows in the cells that line the back of the throat and lungs

Transmission: Measles spreads through the air by breathing, coughing or sneezing. It is so contagious that any child who is exposed to it and is not immune will probably get the disease

Symptoms: Begin 7-14 days after exposure

- Blotchy rash
- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Feeling run down, achy (malaise)
- Tiny white spots with bluish-white centers found inside the mouth (Koplik's spots)

Exposure: The virus lives in the mucus in the nose and throat of the infected person. When that person sneezes or coughs, droplets spray into the air. The droplets can get into other people's noses or throats when they breathe or put their fingers in their mouth or nose after touching an infected surface. The virus can live on infected surfaces for up to 2 hours and spreads so easily that people who are not immune will probably get it when they come close to someone who is infected.

Precautions and PPE considerations: Use gloves and mask when you suspect measles. If possible mask the patient or use an oxygen delivery device. This is spread in droplets so the unit needs to be thoroughly disinfected.

Treatments: Measles can be prevented by the combination MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine

Work Guidelines: If personnel have active measles they shall be excluded from duty for 4 days from the first exposure. Post exposure can be for up to 21 days after initial exposure.