

Measles Information

What are the symptoms?

The signs of measles are a cough, high fever, runny nose and sore red eyes. A few days later, a rash begins on the head and spreads across the body.

How do I know if I'm immune to measles?

To know that you are 99% immune to measles one or more of the following should apply to you:

1. You have had two measles vaccines (MMR). You need to check your vaccination records in your Well Child (Plunket book) or your family doctor may have records. Please show your principal your vaccination record.
2. OR you have been diagnosed with measles in the past, or have a blood test proving measles immunity
3. OR you were born before 1969 as you are likely to have had measles as a child.

You are almost certainly protected from measles if one of the above applies and will not need to be isolated if you come into contact with someone with measles.

I've only had one MMR – do I have to get another vaccination?

To ensure you are 99% protected against measles, it is important to have a second MMR as this vaccine also protects against mumps and rubella. Whilst one MMR does offer 95% of people immunity, it still provides gaps in our community coverage against measles, which puts vulnerable people like new born babies and people with compromised immune systems (e.g. having cancer treatment) at high risk.

Why do I (or my child) have to stay at home in isolation?

If you are developing measles, staying home stops it spreading to others and making them unwell.

What does isolation mean?

It means staying home away from others. Do not go to work, school, group or social activities, sports, or public places like movie theatres, shopping malls, supermarkets and other food markets. Do not use public transport or visit friends or family. Avoid being in the same room as people who are not immune to measles.

What if I or my child feel worse or have symptoms, and need to go to a doctor again?

If you need to see a doctor, **phone** the medical centre or after-hours clinic **before** going there and tell them you (or your child) may have measles. When you arrive, you must be isolated and not sit in the waiting room.

My child hasn't been in the same classroom as a measles case. Are they still at risk?

If your child has been in the same class, room or space as the person with measles while they were infectious, then your child will have been exposed. If your child is not in the same class, even though they may have been in the same classroom afterwards or in the same hall or playground, the risk is much lower. The school is not asking you to keep your child at home, but do watch for symptoms, particularly if they are not vaccinated. We also ask you to check that they are vaccinated.

I don't have any proof that I have been vaccinated– what do I do?

If you have been exposed to measles but are younger than 50 years, and if your doctor cannot confirm you have been vaccinated or had measles, you will need to stay home for the isolation period. Please get vaccinated when you are out of isolation.

If my child has been exposed to measles, do I have to tell others?

You do not need to tell anyone else that your child may be developing measles and is in isolation, unless your child is confirmed as having the virus. Only then will you need to inform the school, and then any family and social contacts.

I'm pregnant or have a weak immune system – am I at risk?

Pregnant women who haven't been vaccinated, and anyone with a weakened immune system, are at greater risk of measles complications. They or their caregiver should ask their doctor or lead maternity carer for advice.