

How to protect yourself and your family from measles

What is measles?

Measles cases have started to spread across the West Midlands. Measles is highly infectious and can lead to serious health complications, especially in children under 1, pregnant women, and people with a weakened immune system. Outbreaks can happen when not enough people have been immunised.

What are the symptoms of measles?

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms. The first symptoms of measles include:

- a high temperature
- a runny or blocked nose
- sneezing
- a cough
- red, sore, watery eyes



A rash usually appears a few days after the cold-like symptoms. The rash starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth, particularly inside the cheeks and on the back of the lips. To learn more about symptoms, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>.

What should you do if you or your child has suspected measles?

If your child develops symptoms, urgently contact your GP. Please contact the surgery by telephone before visiting and tell the reception staff that you think that your child may have measles. Do not attend the surgery unless you are asked to. The doctor will make special arrangements to see your child so that if they have measles, they won't pass it on to others.

How can you protect yourself and your family from measles?

The MMR immunisation is the best way to protect yourself and your family against measles because it is:

- effective
- safe
- free of charge

2 doses of the MMR immunisation are needed to give the best protection against measles.

The first dose of the MMR immunisation is normally given soon after the first birthday, and a second dose given at 3 years and 4 months, just before starting school.

Those born on or after 1 July 2024 will move to a new MMR schedule, with the first dose remaining at 12 months, and the second dose moving from 3 years 4 months to 18 months.

However, you can catch up with missed MMR doses at **any** age.

Research has shown there is **no link** between the MMR immunisation and autism.

The MMR immunisation is safe for all **faiths and cultures**. A pork-free version is available for those who avoid pork products. It is called Priorix.

This immunisation is available at every GP practice, and it is free.

For more information on the MMR immunisation, **scan this QR code** or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

