

DISEASE 101: Measles

What is Measles?



Measles is a highly contagious, life-threatening disease caused by the measles virus.

Though preventable, measles can lead to severe complications and death, especially in young children.

Did You Know?

Measles weakens the immune system, causing it to "forget" how to fight infections and leaving children highly vulnerable.

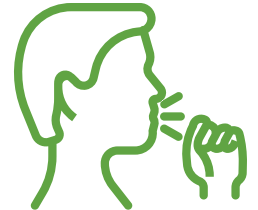
VACCINATION IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PREVENT MEASLES.



There is no specific treatment for measles. However, supportive care, such as hydration and treatment of complications, can improve outcomes.

Disease Transmission

Measles spreads through tiny droplets released when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or breathes.



Symptoms

Measles symptoms typically appear **10-14 days** after exposure to the virus and include a **high fever, cough, runny nose, red, watery eyes, and white spots inside the cheeks.**

Within a few days, a **noticeable rash begins** on the face and neck and spreads to the rest of the body, lasting about a week.



HIGH FEVER



COUGH



RUNNY NOSE



RED, WATERY EYES



NOTICEABLE RASH

In severe cases, measles can lead to complications such as pneumonia, encephalitis (brain swelling), severe diarrhea with dehydration, and ear infections.

By the Numbers

In 2023, gaps in vaccination coverage led to measles outbreaks in 57 countries, a nearly 60% increase from 36 the previous year. **Measles is preventable with two doses of measles vaccine.**



10.3 M
cases



107,500
deaths

Sources: [WHO](#) & [CDC](#) | Updated: February 2025