

## Measles

There is currently an increase of measles cases and outbreaks of measles in some parts of England.

This newsletter focuses on raising awareness of measles and the importance of the MMR vaccination which is essential for the protection against measles.

### What is measles?

Measles is a **highly contagious** viral infection. It is most commonly found in young children who have not been immunised. However, adults can also catch measles if they have not been immunised against it or if they have not had measles before.

### How do you catch measles?

The measles virus lives in the throat and nose of infected people. It is transmitted from person to person by respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person with measles can spread the infection in the four days before they get the rash and once the person has the rash, they can still spread the infection for another 4 days.

## What are the signs and symptoms of measles?

- Measles begins with a fever, runny nose, cough and red sore eyes which lasts for 2-4 days.
- After a few days a red-brown spotty rash will appear. This starts on the face and neck and spreads down the upper body and out towards the arms, hands, legs and feet. Some people can also get spots in the mouth (Koplik spots).
- After about 5 days, the rash starts to disappear.



Small white spots may appear inside the cheeks and on the back of the lips a few days later. These spots usually last a few days.



The rash starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body.



The spots of the measles rash are sometimes raised and join together to form blotchy patches. They're not usually itchy.



The rash looks brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.

## What are the complications of measles?

The complications of measles can include an ear infection, chest infections and pneumonia. In very rare cases, serious complications and death can occur.

## How can I prevent measles?

Measles can be prevented by the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine - MMR vaccine.

This is part of the UK's routine childhood vaccination programme. The first vaccination is given at 12 months followed by a second vaccination at 3 years and 4 months.

It's never too late to have the MMR vaccine. If you haven't had it or you are unsure whether or not you have, you can be vaccinated as an adult to protect you against measles.

## How can I tell if am protected against measles?

People who have had measles in the past are unlikely to get it again.

People born before 1970 are likely to have had measles as a child and will have natural immunity.

People born after 1970 are less likely to have natural immunity and unless they have had 2 doses of the MMR vaccine, they are at risk of getting measles from an infected person.

You cannot have the MMR vaccine if you are pregnant. If you think you are pregnant and have had contact with someone who has measles, contact your healthcare team.

If you had your MMR vaccine before getting pregnant, you will be protected against measles.

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective combined vaccine. 2 doses of the vaccine offers the best protection against:

- [measles](#)
- [mumps](#)
- [rubella \(German measles\)](#)

It is important to check you've had both doses of the MMR vaccine if you:

- Are a frontline health or social care worker to protect both yourself and vulnerable people in your care
- are about to start college or university
- are going to travel abroad
- before planning a pregnancy
- were born between 1970 and 1979, as you may have only been vaccinated against measles
- Were born between 1980 and 1990, as you may not be protected against mumps.

## IPC Advice, Support, Information & Resources:

- Advice, support, and information for care home staff on the management of all infections: E.g., Covid 19; MRSA; CDI; *E. coli*; Scabies
- Advice & support to undertake a range of care home IPC audits to national standard.
- Support safe hospital discharge for residents who have been treated for an infection.
- IPC annual training programme (2023/24) & bespoke IPC courses for care home managers, clinical staff, IPC link champions, care and domestic staff.
- Advice & support on new builds & extensions to meet IPC specifications.

A wide range of excellent **IPC policies and procedures** are available to help you to manage infections in your care homes. Please follow the link below: [Care Services Cumberland - Policies and Procedures | Cumbria County Council](#)

## Training Dates for Your Diary

### March

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 1pm-3.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 1pm-2.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

### April

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 10am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 11am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

### May

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024  
Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 1pm-3.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024  
Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1pm-2.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
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### June

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024  
Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 10am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 10am-11.30am [Click here to join the meeting](#)