



## RUBELLA

### **What is rubella?**

Rubella or German measles is a very contagious disease caused by the rubella virus.

### **Who gets rubella?**

Rubella is not common in children anymore because most children are immunized by age 12 months. It is not usually a serious disease in children. However, in unprotected pregnant women, it may cause fetal damage with severe consequences.

### **How is rubella spread?**

Rubella is spread when a person breathes in droplets of respiratory secretions from an infected person. It can also be spread through contact with infected saliva.

### **What are the symptoms of rubella?**

The rubella virus causes fever, swollen lymph nodes behind the ears and a rash that begins 14 to 17 days after exposure. The rash first begins on the face and spreads to the torso, arms, and legs. A person can spread the disease from as many as five days before the onset of the rash to five to seven days after.

### **How soon do symptoms appear?**

Symptoms appear around 14 days after infection, but the symptoms may be seen as early as 12 days to as late as 23 days after infection.

### **Should an infected person be excluded from work or school?**

Yes, children with postnatal rubella should be excluded from school or childcare for seven days after onset of rash.

### **What is the treatment for rubella?**

There is no specific medicine to treat rubella or make the disease go away faster.

### **What can a person or community do to prevent the spread of rubella?**

Rubella is vaccine preventable. The rubella vaccine is part of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine series given to children at 12 months of age. Immunization of exposed non-pregnant women of childbearing years may be indicated because if the exposure did not result in infection, immunization will protect the person in the future.

## **Resources**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/rubella/about/in-the-us.html>

**Office of Infectious Disease Epidemiology**  
**24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156**

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