

Fall 2025

Department of Public Health
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Stay Safe from Measles: Information for Early Childhood Centers

Measles can be dangerous, especially for babies and young children. It is much more contagious than other viruses.

Measles often starts with fever, runny nose, cough, red eyes, and white spots in the mouth. Several days later, a red rash starts from the face, moving down to the rest of the body.

Measles can lead to a serious lung infection called pneumonia, brain swelling called encephalitis, long term effects, hospitalization, and death.

How does measles spread?

Measles spreads by being around a person with measles who is coughing, sneezing, or just breathing. Measles can be spread before someone with measles has a rash and after symptoms end. Germs can last in a room for two hours after someone with measles has left.

What's the best protection against measles?

Getting vaccinated! The MMR vaccine series is recommended at 12-15 months and again when a child turns 4. Infants over 6 months old should get a dose of MMR vaccine before traveling to a country or area of the U.S. where measles is more common.

About 1 out of 5 people who get measles will be hospitalized.

1 out of every 1,000 people with measles will develop brain swelling due to infection (encephalitis), which may lead to brain damage.

1 to 3 out of 1,000 people with measles will die, even with the best care.

Find measles procedures for daycare and early childhood education centers on the next page. →



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Prevent the spread of measles in daycare and early childhood education centers.



- Keep vaccine records of all who attend.
- Immediately notify the Philadelphia Department of Public Health at 215-685-6741 of any staff or child who is suspected of having measles. Separate them from others and if able, put a mask on them.
- If there is a measles case at your center, the childcare center must work with the health department to to prevent the virus from spreading to more people.
- Unvaccinated children who are exposed to measles must be excluded from school through 21 days after their most recent exposure.
- Children who do not have the needed MMR vaccine for their age should receive a dose by contacting their healthcare provider as soon as possible. Any child in Philadelphia can also get vaccinated at any City health center. Call 215-685-2933 to make an appointment. No fee or ID is needed.
- Visit bit.ly/PhilaMeasles for more information on how children can be vaccinated in Philadelphia.

