

# MEASLES

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q: What are the symptoms of measles?**

**A:** Measles begins with a fever that lasts a couple of days, followed by a cough, runny nose, conjunctivitis (pink eye), and a rash. The rash typically appears first on the face, along the hairline, and behind the ears, and then affects the rest of the body. After about 5 days, the rash fades in the same order in which it appeared.

### **Q: How can I prevent getting measles?**

**A:** The best way to prevent measles and its spread is to get vaccinated. The measles vaccine is very effective, resulting in lifelong immunity for 97% of people who receive 2 doses.\*

The measles vaccine is part of the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine, which prevents all 3 viral infections.

In addition, practicing good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (covering cough/using a tissue) is advised.

### **Q: What should I do if I have symptoms or think I've been exposed?**

**A:** If you or your child has a fever and a rash, or you think either of you has been in contact with the measles virus, call the appointment and advice line at **1-833-KP4Care (574-2273)** (TTY **771**) for further instructions.

### **Q: How do I know if I should have the measles vaccination?**

**A:** Measles vaccination (part of the MMR vaccine series) is routinely recommended for children. The first dose is usually given at age 12 - 15 months and the second dose at age 4 - 6 years old.

You do not need the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine if you:

- Already had 2 doses of MMR
- Already had 1 dose of MMR and are not at high risk of measles exposure
- Are someone born before 1957 and not in a group at higher risk for measles exposure

OR

- Had blood tests that show you are immune to measles, mumps, and rubella

**Q: Is the current measles I'm hearing about the same as German measles?**

**A:** No, the strain that's currently circulating is measles, not German measles. The vaccine provides protection from measles.

**Q: Can I immunize my child sooner than 12 months? Can I get their second dose sooner?**

**A:** CDC recommends all children get two doses of MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine. The first dose should be given around 12 months of age. Children can receive the second dose earlier than age 4 - 6 if it is at least 28 days after the first dose. Two doses of MMR vaccine are 97% effective against measles. One dose of MMR vaccine is 93% effective against measles.

**Q: I have a child less than 6 months of age and am concerned about their being exposed to measles. Can I get them vaccinated early?**

**A:** Measles vaccine is not approved for children less than 6 months of age. Children in this age group typically have measles antibody, acquired from their mother before birth, which provides protection from the disease.

**Q: I am pregnant – what should I do to protect myself and my baby from measles?**

**A:** Measles infection during pregnancy can be associated with increased complications to both the mother and baby. Prior immunizations offer both protection to the mother and baby during pregnancy. If a pregnant patient has symptoms of measles, they should call the appointment and advice line at **1-833-KP4Care (574-2273)** (TTY 771) for further instructions.

**Q: How do I know if I have been immunized?**

**A:** Kaiser Permanente members can review their immunizations in their medical record, accessed via KP.org or the KP app. Once logged in, choose "Medical Record" and select "Immunizations".

If you have questions, call the appointment and advice line at **1-833-KP4Care (574-2273)** (TTY 771).

**Q: How long after being vaccinated will it take for me to be immune?**

**A:** The vaccine takes about 2 weeks to provide protection against measles.

**Q: Where can I go to learn up to date information about the current measles situation?**

**A:** Go to <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/> and click on "Measles Outbreaks Reported to CDC" on the right side of the screen.

\*CDC Measles Vaccination: <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccination.html>