

The Vermont Department of Health is sharing information about measles to ensure child care programs take steps to prevent an outbreak in their center. Measles is one of the most contagious of all diseases and can be dangerous, especially for babies and children under 5 years old.

Ensure staff and children are up to date on their vaccines.

The best way to be protected against measles is with a combination vaccine that provides protection against three diseases: measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

- Children should get two doses of MMR:
 - The first dose at 12 through 15 months of age.
 - The second dose at 4 through 6 years of age, before entering kindergarten.
- Staff at the program should be up to date on the MMR vaccine. If uninsured, adults can get vaccinated at their [local health office](#) at no cost.
- Follow [requirements](#) for documenting and reporting immunization of children in your program. Keep an up-to-date list of unvaccinated children.
- [Immunization schedules](#) are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that you can print and share with parents or post in your center.

Know the characteristics of measles.

The measles virus spreads to others through coughing and sneezing. It is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90% of the people around them may also become infected if they are not protected.

- Someone who has measles will get a **high fever**.
- Soon after the fever, they will have a **cough, runny nose and red eyes**.
- Then a **rash** of tiny, red spots breaks out. The rash starts on the face at the hairline and spreads to the rest of the body.

Someone with measles can pass it to unprotected people from four days before the rash appears to four days after the rash appears. Before someone even knows they're sick, they can spread measles to other people.

Encourage parents to talk to their child's health care provider.

Parents should ask their child's health care provider about their vaccination status. Parents should also contact their provider immediately if their child develops symptoms of measles.

The Health Department is available 24/7 to assist child care programs.

If you are told that a child or staff member in your center has measles, call the Health Department Infectious Disease Program at 802-863-7240. Someone is available 24/7 to take your call. The Health Department will recommend steps you can take to minimize the risk of measles spreading to others.