

# Measles Fact Sheet



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## Basic information

**Ontario recently identified 78 new measles cases over a two week period, the largest measles outbreak we have seen in almost 30 years**

**This year, Ontario has had over 140 cases of measles**

**Typically, Ontario has zero to twenty-two cases a year**

**Many cases have been in people who are not vaccinated for measles**

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## Overview

- **Measles is a highly contagious virus that spreads through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs, sneezes, or talks**
- **The measles virus can stay in the air or on surfaces for up to two hours**
- **People can become infected if they breathe contaminated air or touch an infected surface, then touch their eyes, nose or mouth**
- **Someone who has measles can spread it to others four days before the rash appears to four days after the rash appears**

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## Signs & Symptoms

- Usually begins with a fever, cough, runny nose and red watery eyes, followed by a red blotchy rash that starts on the face and spreads to the body and limbs
- Small blue-white spots (Koplik spots) can appear inside the mouth and throat
- The virus can lead to pneumonia, inflammation of the brain, hearing loss, blindness, seizures, and death

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## Prevention is key

- The measles vaccine is a safe and effective way to help stop the spread of measles
- You are considered protected from measles if you got two doses of the measles vaccine after your first birthday
- Those born before 1970 may have had measles because it was more common at this time
- Those born in 1970 or later need 2 doses of measles vaccine for protection if they did not have measles
- If you are unsure about vaccination status, you can get safely vaccinated with at least one dose of the MMR vaccine
- A blood test can be done to find out if you are immune

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## If you think you have measles

- Isolate immediately by staying home and avoiding contact with others
- Call before visiting a clinic or hospital so they can prepare for your arrival and prevent virus spread
- Wear a well-fitting, medical grade mask (e.g. surgical mask, N95) when getting medical assessment
- Measles is diagnosed with laboratory tests including a blood, urine and nose or throat test
- Your health care provider will assess you for measles and test you if they think you have been infected
- There is no specific treatment, most people can recover at home

**If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to reach out to Auduzhe Mino Nesewinong by phone (416-654-4184) and ask to speak to a Registered Nurse.**