



Understanding measles

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Measles is a very serious and contagious illness. The measles virus can spread through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes. Symptoms include cough, fever, runny nose and inflamed eyes, as well as a red rash that appears on the face, neck, arms and legs.

Because of immunization, measles is now a rare disease in Canada. However, measles is still common in other parts of the world, and it is possible for cases to occur in Canada. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect against measles. When you get immunized, you help protect others as well. The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is provided free as part of your child's routine immunizations. Call your health care provider to make an appointment. If you are travelling to a country where measles is common, you can be vaccinated through a travel health clinic. To find a travel health clinic near you, visit the [HealthLink BC Directory](#).

For more information about measles and vaccinations, click the links below. If you have more questions, call [8-1-1](#).

Featured topics

Vaccination status reporting

The B.C. Government approved the Vaccination Status Reporting Regulation requiring parents or guardians to report school-age children's vaccination status, effective July 1, 2019. Public health units continue to monitor this regulation.

Recent outbreaks of vaccine-preventable disease in B.C. highlight the importance of immunization. The regulation is part of the Government's plan to increase immunization rates in B.C.

- [Vaccination status reporting regulation](#)

Measles

Learn how measles spreads and what the symptoms are. Find out what to do if you think you have measles, and how to prevent spreading measles to others.

- [Measles \(HealthLinkBC File #14b\)](#)
- [Measles \(rubeola\)](#)
- [Measles rash](#)

Measles vaccines

The vaccines that protect against the measles are part of your child's routine immunizations. Learn when your child should be immunized, the benefits of immunization and more.

- [Measles, mumps, rubella \(MMR\) vaccine \(HealthLinkBC File #14a\)](#)
- [Measles, mumps, rubella and varicella \(MMRV\) vaccine \(HealthLinkBC File #14e\)](#)

Immunization

Getting immunized is the best way to protect you and your family from serious and sometimes deadly diseases. When you get immunized, you help protect others as well. Learn more about immunization in British Columbia by visiting our [Vaccinations Health Feature](#).

- [A better immunization experience for your child \(HealthLinkBC File #50e\)](#)
- [B.C. immunization schedules](#)
- [Childhood vaccines are safe \(HealthLinkBC File #50c\)](#)
- [The benefits of immunizing your child \(HealthLinkBC File #50b\)](#)
- [Your baby's immune system and vaccines \(HealthLinkBC File #50a\)](#)

New to Canada

If you've just moved to Canada, it's important to make sure you have received all the vaccines recommended for children and adults in B.C. These vaccines might be different from those recommended in your home country. If you are missing any recommended vaccines, you can receive these missing routine vaccines for free.

Pregnancy

Women should avoid becoming pregnant for one month after getting the vaccine. MMR is a live vaccine, so it is not recommended that pregnant women be vaccinated for measles until after they give birth. Everyone within the same household should be up to date on vaccinations to protect you and your baby.

If you are breastfeeding or chest feeding, the MMR vaccine is safe for you and the baby.

Travel health

Getting immunized should be an important part of your travel plans. Learn more about immunization in British Columbia by visiting our [Vaccinations Health Feature](#). For information on vaccines related to travelling outside of Canada, please visit:

- [Health advice for travellers \(HealthLinkBC File #41a\)](#)
- [Travel health](#)
- [Travel immunizations for adults \(HealthLinkBC File #41c\)](#)
- [Travelling with children \(HealthLinkBC File #41d\)](#)
- [Travel health notices](#)

Some health authorities provide information about measles and immunizations. See the links below.

- [Fraser Health: Measles](#)
- [Interior Health: Get Immunized](#)
- [Northern Health: Measles](#)
- [Vancouver Coastal Health: Measles](#)

You can receive the measles vaccine from your local public health unit, community health centre, at primary care homes, doctor's offices, travel health clinics and pharmacies (for those 4 years of age and older).

You can find a [health unit](#) near you on ImmunizeBC. To receive vaccines related to travel, contact a [travel health clinic](#). It is recommended that you phone ahead to assure that they have vaccine in stock.

BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. They provide provincial and national leadership in public health through surveillance, detection, prevention and consultation. They also provide direct diagnostic and treatment services to people with diseases that may affect the health of the public. To learn more about measles and the measles vaccine, click on the links below.

- [Measles](#)
- [Vaccines in BC](#)

ImmunizeBC

ImmunizeBC works to improve the health of British Columbians and reduce the number of infections by vaccine-preventable diseases by providing information on immunizations to individuals, families and health care providers. Immunization can save lives. Learn more about common vaccines, who should get them and why it is so important to get all of your vaccines on time.

- [Measles, Mumps, Rubella \(MMR\) vaccine](#)
- [Where to get immunized](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

The Public Health Agency of Canada is the Federal Agency responsible for promoting health, preventing and controlling chronic diseases and injuries, preventing and controlling infectious diseases, and preparing and responding to public health emergencies. For more information about measles, including how it spreads and how it can be prevented, click on the link below.

- [Measles](#)

For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/more/resources/healthlink-bc-files or your local public health unit. For non-emergency health information and advice in B.C. visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** (toll-free). For the deaf and hard of hearing, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.