

Measles: Information for Contacts

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Measles is a serious disease that is easily spread through the air. Contacts are people who shared the same air as someone who was infectious with measles. Contacts who are not immune may go on to develop the infection and need to be alert for symptoms.

What is a measles contact?

'Contacts' are people who shared the same air as someone while they were infectious with measles (for example, being in the same room as someone with measles). If the infection is spread and takes hold in contacts, these people go on to develop measles symptoms in the 7 to 18 days after sharing the same air.

Many contacts will be immune to measles because of past measles infection or immunisation and will not get the disease. Other contacts who are susceptible may catch the virus and may then go on to spread the virus to others.

Who is at risk of measles?

People are at risk of measles if they have been a contact of someone with measles and if they are susceptible to measles. People who are regarded as susceptible to measles include:

- Babies under the age of 12 months who have not received their first dose of Measles, Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine.
- Children 12 to <18 months who have not received their second dose of MMR (or MMRV) vaccine.
- Children >18 months and adults born during or since 1966 who have not had two doses of MMR-containing vaccine.
- Any people with a weakened immune system (for example, people who are receiving chemotherapy or radiotherapy for cancer or people who take high-dose steroid medications) even if they have been fully immunised or had past measles infection.

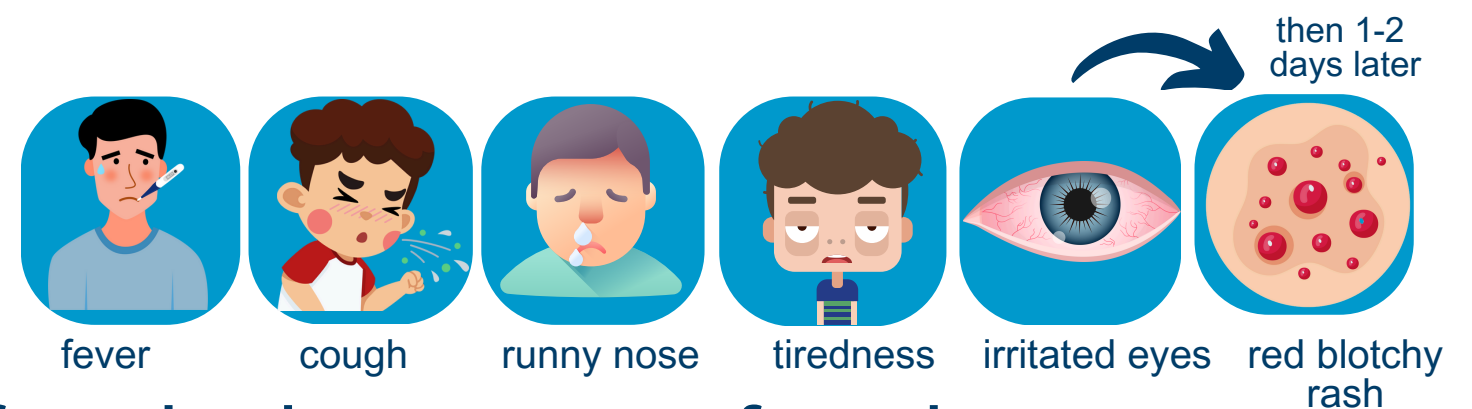
What should contacts do?

Read the [Queensland Health measles fact sheet](#) and note the following for 18 days after their exposure:

- Closely monitor for symptoms of measles
- As a precaution, it is a good idea not to have contact with anyone who may be at risk of measles
- Talk to their regular doctor about checking their immunity to measles where possible
- Respond to communication from the local public health unit as it is sometimes possible to stop the infection in susceptible people – either by giving MMR-containing vaccine or by giving an injection of normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG).

What are the symptoms of measles?

- The first symptoms of measles are feeling tired, fever, runny nose, sore runny eyes and cough. The rash starts later.



If you develop symptoms of measles

- Do not attend public places (such as work, school, early childhood education and care services or shopping centres) or use public transport.
- Organise to see a doctor, preferably your general practitioner, as soon as possible so a diagnosis can be confirmed.
- **Call ahead** to the practice or Emergency Department to alert them of your symptoms and to allow them to make arrangements to assess you safely and without infecting other people. Ask to be given a mask and to be isolated so you don't spread the infection. Take this fact sheet along.
- Call the Gold Coast Public Health Unit (07) 5667 3200



For more information see the Queensland Health fact sheet or call 13-HEALTH (13-432584): <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/217/91/Measles>