Rubeola Encyclopedia Article

Rubeola

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Rubeola

A highly contagious disease, also known as measles, for which there is a vaccine available.

Rubeola, also known as measles, is a serious and highly contagious disease. It is spread by airborne droplets that are introduced into the atmosphere when an infected person sneezes or coughs. The symptoms of measles are a rash over most of the body, high **fever,** cough, runny nose, and watery eyes. The symptoms generally persist for up to two weeks. A small percentage (approximately 10%) of children with measles develop more serious symptoms, such as ear infection, pneumonia, **diarrhea,** and **seizures.** In rare instances, measles can result in **encephalitis** (inflammation of the brain), brain damage, and in extremely rare instances, death. A vaccine against measles has been widely available since 1963, and epidemics are rare. In the 1990s, a few outbreaks of measles were attributed to relaxed attitudes about **immunization,** since the disease seems to be under control. Rubeola, like **rubella** (German measles) is especially threatening to unborn fetuses. If a woman contracts rubeola during pregnancy, miscarriage, **premature birth,** or birth defects can result. Any woman considering pregnancy should verify her immunization against rubeola, rubella, and mumps. The combination vaccine **(MMR vaccine)** is often given at about age 15 months, and between 11 and 12 years of age.

See Also

Immunization.

For Further Study

Organizations

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIADID)
Address: 9000 Rockville Pike
NIH Building 31, Room 7A50
Bethesda, MD 20892-2520
Telephone: (301) 496-5717
(Arm of the National Institutes of Health that deals with allergies and diseases.)

National Vaccine Information Center

Address: 128 Branch Road
Vienna, VA 22180