



# Understanding Measles:

Measles is a serious disease caused by a very infectious virus. This document provides an overview on how measles spreads, recognising symptoms, and the complications. If you think you might have measles, it's important to call your GP surgery and you will need to stay away from other people to avoid spreading the disease.

## 1. Catching Measles

Measles spreads easily when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes.

The virus can stay in the air and on surfaces for up to 2 hours. You can catch measles just by being in a room where an infected person has been, even up to 2 hours after they have left.

A person with measles can spread the infection in the 4 days before they get the rash until 4 days after the rash appears.

## 2. Symptoms of Measles



rash



fever



loss of appetite



sore, red eyes



cough

Other early symptoms include sneezing and a runny or blocked nose. A person with measles will feel very unwell. They will have to spend about five days in bed and will be off school or work for around 2 weeks. There is no treatment or cure for measles. The measles virus also attacks a person's immune system. This means that people who have had measles are more likely to catch other diseases. This effect can last up to 3 years after recovering from measles.

## 3. Possible Complications of Measles



hearing loss



blindness



pneumonia



encephalitis



brain damage



death

More information about measles can be found by scanning this QR code or by visiting [www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles).

