

# You Were Exposed to Measles. Now What?

## How is measles spread?

The virus that causes measles is highly contagious (spreads easily) and most commonly spreads between people who share the same air space, such as a room or office. It spreads through an infected person coughing or sneezing. Small particles can be inhaled into the nose, mouth, airways, and lungs and cause infection.



You may have been exposed to measles from someone even if they were not sick. An infected person can spread measles up to four days before developing a rash. Measles virus can also land on surfaces and objects and be transferred by touch.



## How was I exposed to measles?

You may have been exposed to measles through:

- Co-workers
- Family or friends
- A public place (store, school, social gathering, sporting event, etc.)
- A surface, such as a door knob, or countertop, that has the virus on it

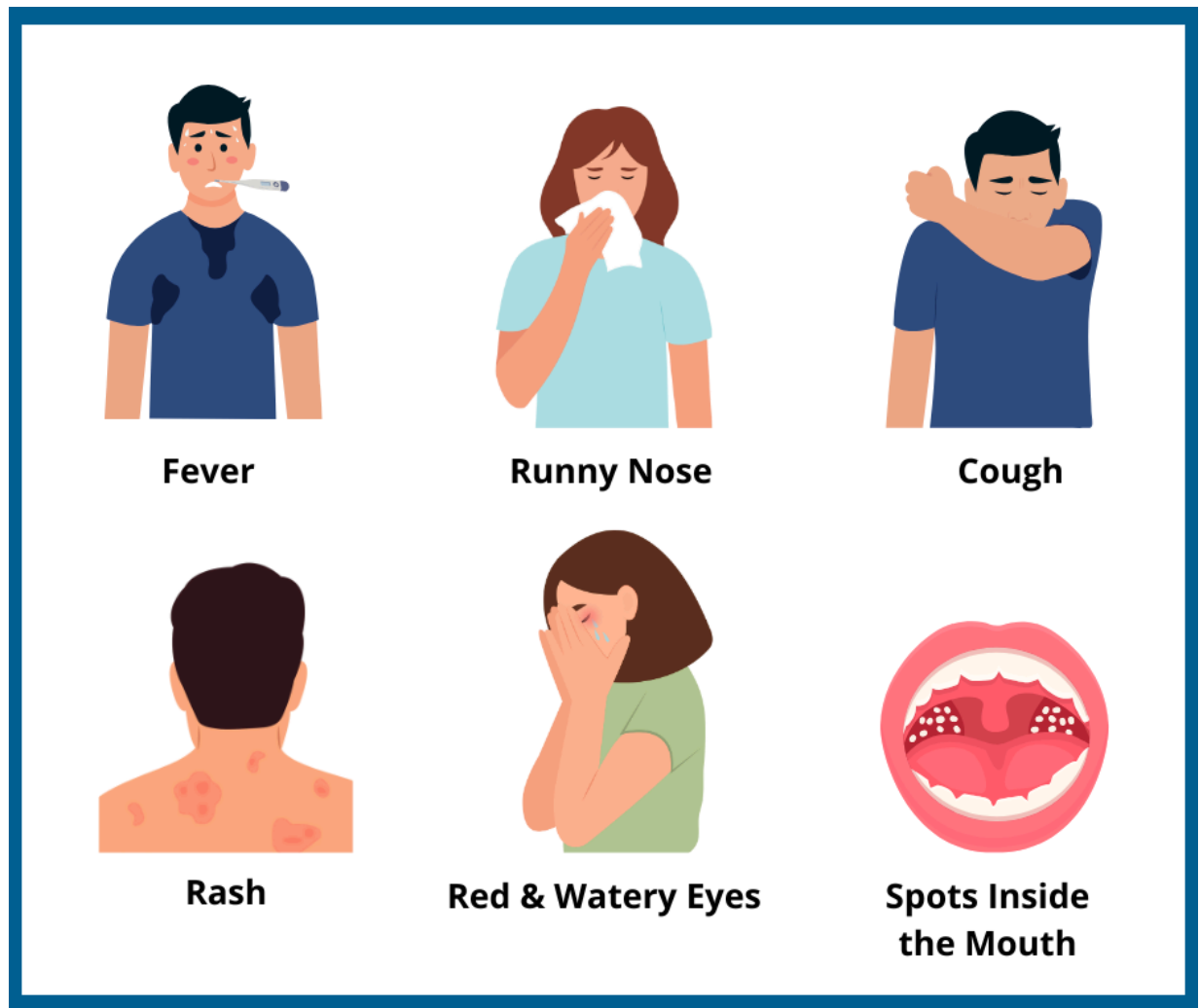
You may have been exposed to the virus if you came in close contact with someone who has measles. Being within the same airspace as a person with measles or entering a space within two hours after the infected person left the airspace counts as close contact.



# What are the symptoms of measles?

Common symptoms of measles include:

- Fever (over 101°F or 38.2°C)
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Red and watery eyes
- Rash
- Tiny white spots inside the mouth (Koplik Spots)



Call the Davis County Health Department at 801-525-5220 right away if you begin to have any of the above symptoms. Symptoms can be mild or more severe, and in some cases, may require you to see a doctor. If you develop life-threatening symptoms, call 911 and let them know that you have been exposed to measles.

## Who is most at risk for measles?

Anyone who is not protected against measles is at risk. Measles can be serious in all age groups. However, there are several groups that are more likely to suffer from measles complications:

- Children younger than 5 years of age
- Adults older than 20 years of age
- Pregnant women
- People with weakened immune systems, such as from leukemia or HIV infection

To learn more about what to do if you have been around someone with measles, please use the [Guidance Tool](#).



## Do I need to stay at home?

All unprotected individuals who have been exposed to measles are recommended to stay home (quarantine) for 21 days. This is because: 1) you had close contact with someone who has measles and 2) being unprotected puts you and others at increased risk for getting measles.

Quarantine is a strategy that helps to slow the spread of the virus by separating and restricting the movement of those who may have been exposed to a contagious disease. Those who are quarantined should stay home from work, school, religious gatherings, and other group settings (e.g., parties, movie theaters, shopping centers, restaurants, etc.).

The best way to protect against measles is to get the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Most people who are vaccinated against measles will be protected for life. If you have not been vaccinated, doing so may help you to end your quarantine.



## **What should I do while I stay at home?**

While you are quarantined, you should check your symptoms daily for **21-28 days**. During this time, respond to the daily text message from the health department regarding how you feel each day. You should watch for symptoms, such as fever, cough, runny nose, red and watering eyes, and rash. If you start to have symptoms, please call the Davis County Health Department at 801-525-5220 right away.

## **What if I'm protected?**

If you are protected, there is no need to quarantine. In very rare instances, a person who is protected may develop measles. As a result, be mindful of how you feel each day. If you do develop any symptoms, please stay home and call the Davis County Health Department at 801-525-5220.

## **Why is it important to self-monitor for symptoms?**

Self-monitoring, or watching for any changes, can help you and public health officials to identify if medical care and/or testing is needed. Monitoring yourself for symptoms can also help public health officials know if others that you have been in contact with or live with are at risk of getting measles too.

## **More information on measles:**

To learn more, visit [Utah's Measles Home Page](#) or contact the Davis County Health Department at 801-525-5200.