

Informational Sheet – Measles

As you may know, there is a measles outbreak in some parts of the United States. At this time, there are no measles cases at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; however, the University is taking proactive steps to ensure the health and safety of our community. It is important to stay informed and take precautions. For the latest case numbers and additional information, please visit [Measles Cases and Outbreaks](#).

What is Measles?

Also known as rubeola, measles is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), if one person has the measles virus, up to 9 out of 10 people that have contact with that person can become infected if not protected. The best protection against measles is the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. The MMR vaccine provides long-lasting protection against all strains of measles.

How is Measles Spread?

Measles lives in the nose and throat of an infected person. It can spread to others through coughing and sneezing. When other people breathe the contaminated air or touch the infected surface, and then touch their eyes, noses, or mouths, they can become infected. The measles virus can live in air for up to two hours.

Signs and Symptoms

Measles symptoms appear 7 to 14 days after contact with the virus. Symptoms of the measles include:

- High fever (may spike to more than 104 F)
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Red, watery eyes
- Sore throat
- Tiny white spots (Koplik spots) may appear inside the mouth two to three days after symptoms begin.
- Rash typically appears 3-5 days after initial symptoms. It usually begins as flat red spots that appear on the face at the hairline. They then spread downward to the neck, trunk, arms, legs, and feet.

In severe cases, measles can lead to serious complications, especially in children younger than 5 years of age. Common complications are ear infections and diarrhea. Serious complications include [pneumonia, encephalitis and death](#)

How to Protect Yourself

Protect yourself with the vaccine. There is no cure for measles, but the MMR vaccine (measles, mumps, and rubella) provides strong protection. [Two doses of MMR vaccine](#) are about 97% effective at preventing measles; one dose is about 93% effective. No booster dose is needed.

If you are unsure of your vaccination status, check your childhood vaccine records. You can access the Student Health Services patient portal to view the vaccine information that you provided to the University when you enrolled.

Practice good hygiene. Wash your hands frequently, cover your coughs and sneezes, and avoid close contact with those who are ill.

Where to get the Vaccine

Student Health Service: MMR vaccines are available at Student Health Services. Call (337)482-1293 to schedule an appointment.

Some people should avoid getting the MMR vaccine and should talk with their healthcare provider. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccines/index.html>.

What to do if you feel sick or were exposed

If you develop symptoms or have been exposed to measles:

- Stay home and isolate yourself.
- Call Student Health Services, your healthcare provider, or an urgent care clinic for guidance.
- Reminder: Measles symptoms can take 7 to 14 days to appear after exposure.