

IDRS Infectious Disease Reporting System

Disease Reporting 24 Hours a Day

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health

RUBELLA

Rubella is a viral disease characterized by slight fever, rash and swollen glands. Most cases are mild.

Symptoms

Symptoms of rubella appear within 12-23 days; usually about 2 weeks. They may include:

- Fine pink rash that first appears on face then progresses downward. The rash usually lasts about 3 days.
- Mild fever
- Joint aches
- Headache
- Runny nose and reddened eyes
- Swollen glands under the ears and neck
- Joint pain is more common in adult women that contract rubella. It may last a long as a month.

Transmission

- Rubella is spread through the air or by touching fluids from the nose or throat of infected people.
- Rubella is contagious from seven days before to seven days after the rash begins.
- People with weak immune systems who get rubella may take longer to get rid of it.
- In places where people are not vaccinated, rubella is primarily a childhood disease. Rubella occurs more frequently in winter and spring.

Treatment

- Most people need no treatment because the disease is mild.
- Pregnant women or those with a weakened immune system should see a health care provider for treatment if they have been exposed.
- People who get Rubella usually are immune to getting it ever again.
- Rubella infection is dangerous because of its ability to damage an unborn baby. Infection of a pregnant woman may result in a miscarriage, stillbirth or the birth of an infant with abnormalities. Rubella can cause a baby to be born with deafness or cataracts and damage a baby's heart, liver, spleen, or brain. Women who had rubella during the first trimester of pregnancy are at the highest risk of having a baby with these problems.

Prevention

- Rubella vaccine is given on or after a child's first birthday, and is usually given as a combination measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccination. Children should receive the first dose between 12 and 15 months of age and the second dose prior to school entry between 4 to 6 years of age.
- Women of childbearing age should ask their health care provider to determine if they are immune to rubella and receive rubella vaccine before they become pregnant, if needed.
- Infected children should not attend school during their infectious period.

All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.



c/o Franklin County Public Health, 280 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-4562

Call: (614) 525-8888 • After Hours: (614) 525-3965 • Fax: (614) 525-8890

Email: idsr@franklincountyohio.gov • Web: www.idrsinfo.org

