

Measles

A highly contagious viral disease characterised by a cough, fever and a spreading rash

Measles

- Caused by infection by Paramyxovirus
- Spread by droplet infection from nose, mouth and throat from infected individuals.
- Incubation period 7-14 days
- Immunity to the virus can be acquired from developing the clinical disease or via active vaccination
- Passive immunity is transferred from an immune mother to her child and lasts for approximately one year

Measles

- Prior to widespread vaccination, measles was extremely common with 90% of the population being infected before the age of 20
- Measles cases dropped by over 95% in the UK during the period of maximum uptake of the measles vaccine

Measles

- Susceptible individuals include those who are not vaccinated, those who have not had their booster immunisation and infants as the maternal immunity decreases.

Measles

- Symptoms include:
 - Sore Throat
 - Cough
 - Runny Nose
 - Myalgia
 - Koplik's spots – (see over)
 - Photophobia
 - Itching
- Rash
 - Appears around day 5 of the disease
 - Lasts 4-7 days
 - Usually starts on head and spreads to other areas
 - Rash is macular (flat discoloured lesions)
 - Or maculo-papular (solid, red & elevated)



Koplik's spots

Small white spots found on the buccal mucosa. They occur about 3 days after the onset of the fever type symptoms and are almost diagnostic of measles

Measles Rash



Investigations

- In many cases, investigations are not required and a diagnosis can be made upon the clinical evidence.
- If required, specific laboratory tests can be carried out to aid diagnosis

Treatment, Prognosis & Complications

- There is no specific treatment for measles
- Any treatment is purely supportive
- Uncomplicated measles has an excellent prognosis.
- The prognosis worsens if complication occur
- Complications may include otitis media, bronchitis, pneumonia, encephalitis (1 in 3000 cases), haemorrhagic measles is rare but does cause widespread bleeding.

Severe Measles Rash

