



Rubella

What is Rubella?

Rubella (also called German measles) is a highly contagious viral disease that may easily spread among people who have never had it and haven't been vaccinated.

How is Rubella Spread?

Rubella is spread by direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected individuals. Rubella can also be transmitted by breathing in droplets that are sprayed into the air when an infected person sneezes, coughs or talks. Rubella can be spread up to seven days before to seven days after the rash appears.

How is Rubella Treated?

There is no specific treatment for rubella.

Is Rubella Dangerous?

While usually a mild disease, rubella can be very dangerous if a woman becomes infected while she is pregnant. Rubella can cause birth defects such as hearing difficulties, blindness, heart problems, mental retardation, and may also cause miscarriage.

Because of this, all women who plan to have children should have a blood test prior to pregnancy to make sure they are immune to rubella.

How can Rubella be prevented?

Protect your children by having them vaccinated when they are 12-15 months old, and again when they are about to enter kindergarten. Rubella vaccine is usually given in a shot called MMR, which protects against measles, mumps and rubella.

Symptoms of Rubella:

Rubella is a mild illness which may present with few or no symptoms. Symptoms may include:

- Rash
- Slight fever
- Joint aches
- Headache
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Reddened eyes
- Swelling of the lymph nodes (often in the back of the neck)

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