

EXPOSED TO MEASLES: WHAT IS PEP?

If you've been exposed to someone with measles and you're **not fully protected** – meaning you have 0 doses of the measles vaccine, only 1 dose of the measles vaccine, or you aren't sure if you have had the measles vaccine or infection in the past – you could get sick from measles.

For people who are not fully protected, Public Health can help arrange for a medication that can help prevent the exposure from turning into measles. We call this post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

You or your baby/child may benefit from PEP depending on how long it has been since you were exposed, because it only works if you get it within the first few days after your exposure.

Timing is critical, acting quickly can make a big difference.

There are two types of PEP for measles:

- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. You can get this from your family doctor or at a Public Health clinic
- Immunoglobulin (Ig), a type of antibody treatment. Public Health can arrange for you to get it at a hospital

The type of PEP you can get depends on your age, if you are immunocompromised, if you are pregnant, and how recently you were exposed. Public Health will let you know which one you may be eligible for.

There are some groups who are more vulnerable to severe illness from measles, so PEP is especially important to help protect:

- Babies under one year old
- Pregnant women who aren't fully protected
- People with weakened immune systems (due to illness or treatment)

PEP lowers your chance of getting sick with measles, but it is **not 100% effective**. Watch for symptoms for 21 days after your exposure. To help protect others, avoid meeting with high-risk individuals (infants and anyone who is immunocompromised and/or pregnant) and visiting high-risk places like hospitals, long-term care homes, or childcare settings for these 21 days.

For more information, please call Public Health.

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