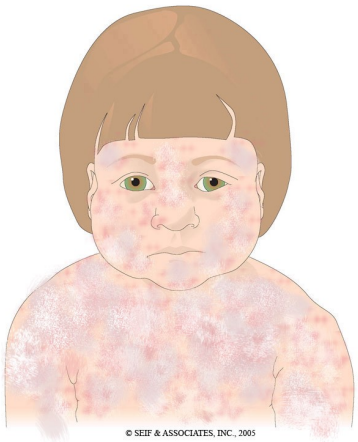
Measles

You or your children have measles. This is a viral illness. It is transmitted by droplets from breathing passages of a person who has the virus. **This is a very contagious disease. Typically, the most susceptible family members will develop the disease.** The MMR immunization given in childhood generally prevents this illness which is most common in childhood.



Measles has an incubation period of ten to twelve days. **It is already contagious a few days before any *diagnosis* (learning what is wrong) is made**. A newborn baby up to 6 months of age will generally have immunity which has been passed on from the mother. *It is best to avoid contact with people from one week after exposure to five days after appearance of the rash.*

Early in the illness there will be fever, followed by a hacking cough, and soreness (*inflammation*) of the eyes (*conjunctivitis*). This is followed in a couple of days by a flat red rash that appears on the upper body. After appearing on the upper body, the rash will spread downward. The rash varies in how it looks.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- It is necessary to get adequate bed rest.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Keep your child isolated from others until the rash is gone.
- Keep your child out of bright light to protect their eyes.
- The cough can be treated with a humidifier and cough medicine.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD DEVELOPS:

- A severe headache or irritability.
- Unusual sleepiness or delirium.
- Repeated vomiting, labored or rapid breathing.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 12/15/2001 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.