



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



## Clinical Advisory

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| To:      | All staff  |
| c.c.:    | ECAT, Area Operations Managers                   |
| From:    | Medical Director                                 |
| Date:    | 16th November 2017                               |
| Subject: | <b>Measles Outbreak – Dublin and Meath areas</b> |

Dear colleagues,

The HSE's Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HPSC) have been monitoring a measles outbreak in Dublin and Meath. Initially 5 cases were identified, this has now been revised to 17 confirmed cases. As with any infectious disease, it may also appear in other parts of the country, and this Advisory is intended to bring this to the attention of staff nationally.

Measles is one of the most contagious of all infectious diseases; approximately 9 out of 10 susceptible persons with close contact to a measles patient will develop measles. The virus is transmitted by direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Measles virus can remain infectious in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area.

### **If dealing with a case of suspected measles:**

Place surgical mask on patient if possible.

Wear a surgical mask, disposable apron and gloves.

On completion of call, clean the interior of the vehicle in the normal manner and do not use vehicle for two hours.

## If you have symptoms suggestive of measles

Stay at home, do not report for work, consult with your GP.

People who have not been fully vaccinated with MMR vaccine or have not had measles in the past are at high risk of getting measles if exposed. Those most at risk of catching measles are those who are not fully vaccinated with 2 doses of MMR vaccine such as babies younger than 12 months who are too young to be vaccinated, and those with weakened immune systems.

## Clinical features of measles

**Measles starts with cold-like symptoms that develop about 10 days after becoming infected. This is followed a few days later by the measles rash. Patients are infectious from 4 days before to 4 days after rash onset.**

**How to recognise measles:**

- Incubation period 10-12 days after exposure
- Prodrome 2-4 days
  - o fever, malaise and loss of appetite
  - o cough, coryza (blocked or runny nose), conjunctivitis
  - o Koplik spots (rash on mucous membranes)
  - o stepwise increase in fever to 39.4°C–40.5°C
- Rash
  - o 2-4 days after prodrome, 14 days after exposure
  - o persists 5-6 days
  - o begins on face and upper neck
  - o maculopapular, becomes confluent
  - o fades in order of appearance

**Runny or blocked nose (coryza) and red, sore eyes (conjunctivitis)**



**Koplik spots (appear in first few days of illness, usually last for a few days) small greyish-blue-white spots (often on a reddened background) that occur on the inside of the cheeks early in the 24-48 hours before the rash stage.**



**Rash usually starts on head or neck and moves down the body - patient usually feels very ill during first 1-2 days of rash onset. Rash fades from head to neck**



For further information please see the HPSC website:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/measles/factsheet/>

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Medical Director.**