

School District of McFarland
Parent Information

Measles Information Update

Since April 16, 2008, 4 cases of measles have been diagnosed in Wisconsin residents.

What is measles: Measles is a virus that is very contagious and can infect any person of any age who has not previously had the disease or the measles vaccine. The virus is spread by airborne droplets, as a result of coughing or sneezing. Measles is characterized by symptoms of cold like signs such as a runny nose, high temperature, cough, and a red blotchy rash appearing at hairline and spreading down the body to the arms and legs. The rash disappears in the same order of appearance (head to foot) in about 5-6 days.

Measles can be spread from one day before the onset of cold symptoms through the 4th day of the rash. The only way to determine if an illness is measles is through a blood test. Ear infections, pneumonia, or encephalitis (brain inflammation) are complications that can result from this illness. Measles can be prevented with the vaccine. Listed below are guidelines for vaccination. Please contact your health care provider or the Wisconsin Immunization Program at 267-9959 for specific questions.

Measles Vaccination Guide:

For Children:

Two doses, 1st at 12-15 months, 2nd between 4-6 years of age (Given as MMR vaccine)

Two doses normally provide lifelong immunity.

School Requirements:

State law requires MMR vaccine for students in daycare (one dose), Grades K-12 (2 doses)

For Adults:

People born before 1957 are probably immune to measles by having acquired the disease naturally.

For most adults born in or after 1957, Public health recommends one dose. Only those that work in health-care, who attend college, or who travel internationally need two doses. If you are not sure about your measles history or vaccine dates, you should contact your health care provider about receiving the vaccine.

The vaccine (given as a measles, mump and rubella combination) takes effect after 2-3 weeks. Two doses are expected to provide lifelong immunity for >99% who receive it.