



## Preparing for and Responding to Measles in Your Child Care Center

Measles can spread quickly in a childcare setting. Unvaccinated children and staff are at risk for severe disease, especially children 5 years of age and younger, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems. The most important step you can take is to ensure children and staff are vaccinated with the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. The MMR vaccine is safe and effective at preventing measles disease.

### How to prepare

- Ensure children are vaccinated with the MMR vaccine or have an exemption on file.
- Encourage staff to confirm they have received the MMR vaccine or have immunity to measles. If they know they aren't immune to measles, encourage them to receive the MMR vaccine.
- Save immunization and exemption records for all children and make sure these records are current and easy to look up.
- Inform families of unvaccinated children and unvaccinated staff that they may need to stay home for up to 21 days each time they are near someone who has measles.
- Know the signs and symptoms of measles:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Runny nose
  - Red, watery eyes
  - Rash that starts on the face and moves down the body
- Click [here](#) for a Measles (Rubeola) Fact Sheet.

### Steps to take if there has been a person with measles at your center

Child care providers are required to let the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) know if someone with measles has been at their child care center.

1. Contact ADH if someone with measles may have been at your child care center by calling 501-661-2381 during normal business hours (8am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday) or 1-800-554-5738 outside of normal business hours.
2. Please follow the instructions provided to you by ADH.

3. Review the attendance records for all children that attended your center during the time the person with measles may have been at your center and track the:
  - a. Child or staff member's first and last name
  - b. Address
  - c. Phone number
  - d. Parents' first and last names (for children only)
  - e. Date of birth
  - f. Days the child normally attends your center
  - g. Classroom of the child
  - h. MMR vaccination date (if applicable)
4. If ADH has confirmed the person did have measles and they were sick while at your center, you may need to share the information gathered during step 3 with ADH.
5. Let ADH know if anyone else who has been in your child care center becomes sick with measles symptoms.
6. Please follow the public health recommendations for people who ADH has determined may have been near a person with measles and could potentially spread measles to other people.

## Why does ADH need this information?

Measles spreads easily and rapidly. It has the potential to cause severe disease; therefore, measles is classified as a reportable disease in Arkansas to ensure a rapid public health response. ADH investigates all suspected cases of measles, identifies any contacts of a measles case that are at risk of developing measles, and determines needed precautions.

Schools and child care settings are required to report under the communicable disease reporting rules found in [Ark. Code Ann. §§ 20-7-101 et seq.](#)

- The law requires reporting of both confirmed cases and suspected cases. Anyone who has contact with a person with measles will be referred to ADH for further information and guidance.
- Measles is specifically listed as a reportable disease under Arkansas State Board of Health Rules Pertaining to Reportable Diseases (Ark. Code. Ann §§ 20-7-101 et seq.)

It is important that ADH gets information as soon as possible so that ADH can notify families of the exposure, let families know what they should do if they were not vaccinated at the time of exposure, and let families know how they can contact ADH and seek care if they develop symptoms.

## Additional Resources

- [Measles \(Rubeola\) - Arkansas Department of Health](#)