

Rubella (also called German measles or three day measles) is a disease caused by a virus.

## SYMPTOMS

- Mild fever (less than 102° F or 38.9° C)
- Headache
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Pain or swelling behind the ears and back of the neck
- Joint pain and stiffness
- Rash

Symptoms begin 2 to 3 weeks after being exposed to the virus. Symptoms often start with a rash in children. Older children and adults may get a mild fever, swollen glands and cold-like symptoms before they get the rash. The rash begins on the face and quickly spreads down and out to the arms and legs.

Up to half of people with rubella have no symptoms at all.

## COMPLICATIONS

Some people with rubella can have joint pain or stiffness for up to a month after the rash has gone away. Rarely, rubella can cause an ear infection or swelling of the brain (encephalitis).

If a woman gets rubella in the first 3 months she is pregnant, the baby could be born early or be born with problems like deafness, eye or heart problems, mental slowness or problems with other organs. Nine out of 10 babies who are born to mothers who get rubella in the first 3 months of pregnancy are born with some kind of problem.

## TREATMENT

There is no medicine to treat rubella. Symptoms are often mild and do not need to be treated. Symptoms can be treated with bed rest and medicine to make the fever go down. People who are sick with rubella should stay away from pregnant women and others because it spreads easily.

## HOW IT SPREADS

The germ that causes rubella spreads from person to person through the air when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.

**HOW TO PREVENT RUBELLA—READ THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS PAGE**

## Vaccination

The best way to prevent rubella is through vaccination. The vaccine that protects against rubella also protects against mumps and measles (MMR).

Two doses of MMR are needed to be fully protected against rubella (mumps and measles). Most children in the US get MMR vaccine between 12-15 months and again at 4-6 years of age.

Women who might get pregnant should check with their doctors to make sure they have been vaccinated against rubella.

Rubella is rarely seen in the US anymore, since most people are vaccinated against rubella as children. Rubella is still common in many other parts of the world. People visiting the US and unvaccinated travelers coming home from other countries can bring rubella into the US and cause outbreaks.

## Use Good Health Manners

Cough and sneeze into your elbow or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue. Wash hands after throwing the tissue away (see below).

## Handwashing

Wash hands often. Take extra care washing your hands if you are sick.

### MORE ABOUT HANDWASHING

#### How to Wash



1. Wet



2. Soap



3. Scrub 15 –20 seconds



4. Rinse



5. Dry



6. Use towel to turn off faucet

#### WHEN TO WASH

- Before and after eating
- Before, during and after making and touching food
- After using the bathroom or helping a child use the bathroom
- After changing or checking a diaper
- After coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose and after wiping a child's nose
- After touching blood or body fluids (urine, feces, vomit, etc)
- After touching animals or their waste
- After touching trash
- After touching money
- When hands look, feel or smell dirty

Washing hands is the best way to prevent the spread of many illnesses. No soap and water? Use a hand sanitizer made with alcohol (follow package label) – then wash with soap and water as soon as you can.