

Notification of measles outbreak

On _____, a person in your establishment contracted measles.

Measles is an acute, highly contagious viral disease characterised by fever, cough, runny nose, conjunctivitis and rash. The characteristic rash appears from the third to the seventh day of illness, first on the face, then generalises, lasts 4–7 days and may end in scaling. The course of the disease is usually much more severe in infants and adults than in young children. Complications of the disease can manifest as otitis media, pneumonia, diarrhoea and inflammation of brain tissue. Fatal outcome is relatively rare.

Humans are the only natural host of measles virus. Measles is transmitted by droplets, through the air, by direct contact with respiratory secretions of an infected person, and less commonly by indirect transmission through freshly contaminated objects. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases.

The incubation period is about 10 days, with a range of 7-18 days between the time of exposure and the onset of fever. The average interval from exposure to the onset of rash is 14 days, rarely 19-21 days.

Infected persons become infectious 1-2 days before the onset of symptoms (3-5 days before the rash appears) and remain infectious for up to 4 days after the rash appears. Persons with a weakened immune response can keep shedding viruses until the end of the illness.

Measles vaccination was made compulsory in Slovenia in 1968. Since 1990, children are routinely vaccinated against measles with the first dose of the vaccine from 12 months to 18 months of age and revaccinated when they enter primary school. After vaccination, the vast majority of persons develop lifelong immunity to measles.

Persons who have been in contact with a person with measles during the 4 days before the onset of the rash and the 4-5 days after the onset of the rash, who were born after 1960 and who have not been vaccinated against measles or who have no evidence of measles resistance will be vaccinated against measles as a prophylactic vaccine if less than 72 hours have elapsed since the time of contact with the person with measles.

People who develop measles-like symptoms should stay at home and consult their doctor by telephone for further action.

Kind regards,

_____, MD, Epidemiology Specialist

In case you need further instructions, please call: _____