

Measles –Rubella Awareness

15th October 2018

According to the directions of the BMC health and education department the 'Measles Rubella' vaccine needs to be administered to all children up to the age of fifteen. Our school has also taken effective steps in the same direction. We had organized an awareness talk for the children and parents of classes 8, 9 and 10. This was conducted by the Interact club of our school where the Rotary District 3141 had taken on the mantle to create awareness to prevent these dreaded diseases. Eminent Doctors from H. N (Reliance) Hospital Dr. Rahul Varma and Dr. Ashwin Shetty enlightened us on the subjects.

MEASLES

Measles is a childhood infection caused by a virus. Once quite common, measles can now almost always be prevented with a vaccine.

Also called Rubeola measles can be serious and even fatal for small children. While death rates have been falling worldwide as more children received the measles vaccine, the disease still kills more than 100000 people a year, most under the age of 5.

As a result of high vaccination rates in general, measles hasn't been widespread in the United States for more than a decade. The United States averaged about 60 cases of measles a year from 2000 to 2010, but the average number of cases jumped to 205 a year in recent years. Most of these cases originate outside the country and occurred in people who were unvaccinated or who didn't know whether or not they had been vaccinated.

Causes

Measles is a highly contagious illness caused by a virus that replicates in the nose and throat of an infected child or adult. Then, when someone with measles coughs, sneezes or talks, infected droplets spray into the air, where often people can inhale them.

The infected droplets may also land on a surface where they remain active and contagious for several hours. You can contract the virus by putting your finger in your mouth or nose or rubbing your eyes after touching the infected surface.

After 90 percent of susceptible people who are exposed to someone with the virus will be infected

Symptoms

Measles signs and symptoms appears around 10 to 14 days after exposure to virus. Signs and symptoms of measles typically include:

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Inflamed eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Tiny white spots with bluish white centers on a red background found inside the mouth on the inner lining of the cheek – also called Koplik's spots.
- A skin rash made up of large flat blotches that often flow into one another. The infection occurs in sequential stages in a period of two to three weeks.
- **Infection and incubation.** For the first 10 to 14 days after the child is infected the measles virus incubates. You have no signs or symptoms of measles during this time.
- **Non specific signs and symptoms.** Measles typically begin with a mild to moderate fever, often accompanied by a persistent cough, runny nose, inflamed eyes and sour throat. This relatively mild illness may last two or three days.

- **Acute illness and rash.** The rash consists of small red spots, some of which are slightly raised. Spots and bumps in light cluster give the skin a splotchy red appearance. The face breaks out first. Over the next few days, the rash spreads down the arms and trunk, then over the thighs, lower leg and feet. At the same time, the fever rises sharply, often as high as 104 to 105.8 (40 to 41 C). The measles rash gradually recedes, fading first from the face and last from the thighs and feet.

When to see a doctor

Call your doctor if you think you or your child may have been exposed to measles or if you or your child has a rash resembling measles.

Review your family's immunization records with your doctor, especially before starting elementary school, before college and before international travel.

Risk factors

Risk factors for measles includes:

- **Being unvaccinated.** If haven't received the vaccine for measles, you are much more likely to develop the disease.
- **Travelling internationally.** If you travel to developing countries, where measles is more common, you are at higher risk of catching the disease.
- **Having a vitamin A deficiency.** If you don't have enough vitamin A in your diet , you're more likely to have more severe symptoms and complications.

Complications

Complications of measles include :

- **Ear infection.** One of the most common complications of measles is a bacterial ear infection.
- **Bronchitis, laryngitis or croup.** Measles may lead to inflammation of your voice box (larynx) or inflammation of inner walls that line the main air passageways o your lungs (bronchial tubes).
- **Pneumonia.** Pneumonia is a common complication of measles. People with compromised immune system can develop an especially dangerous variety of pneumonia that is sometimes fatal.
- **Encephalitis.** About 1 in 1000 people with measles develops a complication called encephalitis. Encephalitis may occur right after measles, or it might not occur until months later.
- **Pregnancy problems.** A pregnant woman needs to take special care to avoid measles because the disease can cause preterm labor, low birth weight and maternal death.

Rubella is a contagious disease caused by a virus. For some people—especially pregnant women and their unborn babies—rubella can be serious. Make sure your child are protected from rubella by getting vaccinated on schedule.